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ELEMENTS

OF

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE,

INTRODUCTORY TO

USEFUL BOOKS IN THE PRINCIPAL BRANCHES

OF

LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.

WITH

LISTS OF THE MOST APPROVED AUTHORS.

DESIGNED CHIEFLY FOR THE

JUNIOR STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITIES,

AND THE

HIGHER CLASSES IN SCHOOLS.

BY HENRY KETT, B.D.

FELLOW AND TUTOR OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1802.

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TO THE

MOST NOBLE WILLIAM HENRY CAVENDISH,

DUKE OF PORTLAND,

LORD PRESIDENT OF HIS MAJESTY's COUNCIL,

CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD;

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD ELDON,

LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR OF ENGLAND,

HIGH STEWARD OF THE UNIVERSITY;

THE REVEREND MICHAEL MARLOW, D. D.

PRESIDENT OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE,

AND VICE-CHANCELLOR;

AND TO

THE OTHER RIGHT REVEREND AND REVEREND

THE HEADS AND GOVERNORS OF COLLEGES AND HALLS

IN OXFORD,

THE FOLLOWING WORK

IS WITH THEIR PERMISSION RESPECTFULLY

INSCRIBED

BY THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following work contains the ſubſtance of a Courſe of Lectures, which I have occaſionally read to my pupils during the laſt twelve years. The ſatisfaction which they expreſſed on hearing them has encouraged me to hope, that they will not prove unacceptable to thoſe, for whoſe uſe they are now made public.

To aſſert a claim to originality in ſuch a work as this would perhaps only be equivalent to a confeſſion of its demerit. My pretenſions to public regard muſt depend in no ſmall degree upon the manner in which I have clothed old ideas in a new dreſs, and upon my ſkill in compreſſing within a moderate compaſs the ſubſtance of large and voluminous works. Upon all my ſubjects I have endeavoured to reflect light from every quarter which my reading would afford. My references, and the books mentioned in my

Appendix, will ſhow the ſources from which I have derived my principal information; but it would be almoſt an endleſs, and perhaps a very oſtentatious taſk to enumerate all my literary obligations.

There are a few topics indeed, with reſpect to which I think I may be allowed to aſſert ſome claims to novelty. For many of my remarks on *the Greek Language* I am indebted principally to my own obſervations upon its nature and comparative merits; the *Hiſtory of Chivalry*, important as the influence of that remarkable inſtitution has been upon manners, is a ſubject upon which I have been able to collect little information from Engliſh Authors; and the *Hiſtory of the Revival of Claſſical Learning*, although a topic of the ſtrongeſt intereſt to every man of letters, has never been fully treated by any writer, with whoſe works I am acquainted.

Many of my *Quotations* are ſelected from ſuch books, as, either from the number of the volumes, their ſcarceneſs, or expence, do not frequently come within the reach of young men. If ſome of them are borrowed from more obvious and popular works, their peculiar beauty, ſtrength, and appoſiteneſs, it is

pre-

presumed, will justify their introduction. But elegant as my quotations may be in point of style, conclusive as to reasoning, or striking as to the impression they are calculated to make, they will not completely answer the intended purpose, if, while they raise a high opinion of the merit of their authors, they do not excite an eager curiosity to peruse more of their works.

If I should be fortunate enough to succeed in procuring for eminent writers any additional degree of regard; if I should excite a more ardent and more active attention to any branches of useful knowledge; and if the variety of my topics should contribute to diffuse more widely the light of general information and useful truth; I shall have the satisfaction to reflect, that my time has not been sacrificed to a frivolous purpose by thus endeavouring, in conformity with the occupations of the most valuable portion of my life, to instruct the rising generation.

It has been suggested to me by some of my Oxford friends, that this work may prove useful to those who are qualifying themselves to pass the public Examinations for their degrees in this University. It certainly comprises

prifes a furvey of the principal fubjects, with which the new Statute requires them to be acquainted; and if it does not contain notices and lifts of moft of the books which they muft neceffarily refort to, I muft confefs I know not in what Catalogue they are to be found. I wifh it however to be well underftood, that this is an accidental purpofe to which my work is applicable; for I repeat my affertion, that the fubftance of it has been read to my pupils in the form of Lectures for a confiderable time paft; and more than fix years have now elapfed fince the general Table of Contents was printed, and diftributed among my Friends.

TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD,
May 12, 1802.

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THE INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

To ſeparate ſome of the moſt uſeful and the moſt beautiful parts from the great maſs of human knowledge; to arrange them in ſuch regular order, that they may be inſpected with eaſe, and varied at pleaſure; and to recommend them to the careful examination of young men who are ſtudiouſly diſpoſed, conſtitute the deſign of the Author of this work.

The more he reflects upon the PRESENT STATE OF SOCIETY, the VARIOUS FACULTIES of the mind, and the GREAT ADVANTAGES which ariſe from acquiring an AMPLE FUND OF VALUABLE IDEAS, the more he is convinced of the utility of engaging in the purſuit of general knowledge, *as far as may be conſiſtent with profeſſional views, and particular ſituations in life.*

The cuſtom has prevailed of late years, much more than it did formerly, of introducing young men at an early age into the mixed company of perſons older than themſelves. As this is the prevailing mode, they ought to

be

be prepared in ſome degree at leaſt to blend manly and ſerious topics with the ſallies of light and gay converſation. And, in order to be qualified for the introduction of ſuch ſubjects, it ſeems requiſite to unite to the ſtudy of the learned languages other attainments, which have a reference to the ſciences, the works of nature, and the affairs of active life.

The improvements of the times have turned the attention of the learned to new purſuits, and given their conduct a new direction. The Scholar, no longer confined within the walls of a College, as was formerly the caſe, now mixes in general ſociety, and adapts his ſtudies to an enlarged ſphere of obſervation: he does not limit his reading to the works of the ancients, or to his profeſſional reſearches alone; but ſhows his proficiency in the various parts of literature, which are intereſting to the world at large.

The condition of ſocial intercourſe among thoſe, who have had the advantages of a liberal education, is at preſent ſo happily improved, that a free communication ſubſiſts between all intelligent and well-informed men. The Divine, the Phyſician, the Barriſter,

rister, the Artist, and the Merchant, associate together without reserve, and augment the pleasure they derive from conversation, in proportion as they obtain an insight into each other's pursuits and occupations. The more ideas they acquire in common, the sooner their prejudices are removed, a more perfect congeniality of opinion prevails, they rise higher in each other's estimation, and the pleasure of society is ripened into the sentiments of attachment and friendship. In such parties, where "the feast of reason and the flow of soul" prevail with the happiest effect, he who unites to knowledge of the world the leading ideas and rational principles, which well-chosen books can supply, will render himself the most acceptable, and the most valuable companion.

Such are now the abundant productions of the press, that books written in our own language upon all subjects whatever are constantly published, quickly circulate through the whole kingdom, and are easy of access to general readers. This circumstance has lessened that wide and very evident distinction, which in former times prevailed between the learned and the unlearned classes of the community. At present, they who have not enjoyed the

benefit of a claſſical education may reap many of the fruits of learning without the labour of cultivation, as tranſlations furniſh them with convenient and eaſy expedients, which can in ſome meaſure, although an incomplete one, make amends for their ignorance of the original authors. And upon all ſubjects of general Literature, Science, and Taſte, in their actual and moſt highly improved ſtate, they have the ſame means of information in their power with thoſe who have been regularly educated in the Univerſities, and the public ſchools.

Thus favourable are the temper and the circumſtances of the Times to the diffuſion of knowledge. And if the moſt mature and deliberate deciſions of reflection and experience be required to give weight to the opinion, that comprehenſive views of learning and ſcience are calculated to produce the beſt effects upon the mind, reference can be made to both ancient and modern authorities—to writers of no leſs eminence than Quintilian, Milton, and Locke. Their obſervations tend to prove, that cloſe attention to a profeſſional ſtudy is an affair of the firſt importance, but that invariable and excluſive application to any one purſuit is the certain mark of a contracted

tracted education. For hence the ſtudent is led to form a diſlike to occupations diſſimilar to his own, and to entertain prejudices againſt thoſe who exerciſe them. He is liable to view mankind and their employments through a wrong and a diſcoloured medium, and to make imperfect, if not falſe eſtimates of their uſe and value. In order to prevent the growth of ſuch contractedneſs of diſpoſition, and ſuch errors of judgment, what method can be more efficacious, than to open ſome of the gates of general knowledge, and diſplay its moſt beautiful proſpects fully to his view?

Such Proſpects, diſtinctly and deliberately ſurveyed, will produce the moſt beneficial effects upon his temper and opinions. While they place before him the means of increaſing his information, they will render him a more correct judge of its value, and ſecure him from conceit, affectation, and pedantry. They will render him more capable of appreciating the relative importance and comparative merit of different ſtudies, when referred to the uſe and the ornament of life. He will diſcern the natural affinity which ſubſiſts between the different branches of polite literature, and how capable they are of increaſing the

the influence, and improving the beauties of each other. In ſhort, various purſuits, ſkilfully choſen and aſſiduouſly followed, can give proper activity to every faculty of the mind, inaſmuch as they engage the judgment, the memory, and the imagination, in an agreeable exerciſe, and are aſſociated for one beneficial purpoſe—like the genial drops of rain, which deſcend from heaven, they unite in one common ſtream to ſtrengthen and enlarge the current of knowledge.

By ſtudies thus diverſified, the mind is ſupplied with copious materials for the ſerious reflexions of retirement, or the lively intercourſe of ſociety; it is enabled, by the combination of many particular ideas, to form thoſe general principles, which it is ever eager to embrace, and which are of eminent uſe in the conduct of life, by adding ſuch flexibility to thought, and quickneſs to judgment, as in every ſituation may prove pleaſing, and highly advantageous. In ſhort, ſuch a plan is calculated to diſſeminate that knowledge, which is adapted to the preſent improved ſtate of ſociety, to diveſt learning of pedantry, and to afford the ſcholar ſome inſight into the reſearches of the philoſopher, the occupations of the man of

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buſineſs, and the pleaſures of the man of taſte.

And as the Arts and Sciences beſtow mutual aſſiſtance and reflect mutual light upon each other, ſo are they highly efficacious and beneficial when combined with profeſſional occupations: to ſome they are eſſentially neceſſary, to all they are ornamental—they ſupply analogies, which are inſtrumental to their perfect elucidation, and they afford ſupplies, which are conducive to their complete ſucceſs.

Every one muſt allow, that all ſyſtems of Education, if conſtituted upon right principles, ſhould be well adapted to the ſituations of thoſe, for whoſe ſervice they are intended. In ſelecting the topics of the following work, I have therefore conſidered Young Men, with a view to their moſt important and moſt uſeful relations in life, as CHRISTIANS, as STUDENTS, and as MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, the welfare and proſperity of which depend upon the uſefulneſs of their attainments, and the reſpectability of their conduct.

It is evident from general obſervation, that the

the principles of religion are congenial with the mind of man: for even among tribes the moſt barbarous and uncivilized, whether we explore the wilds of Africa, or the ſhores of the Pacific Ocean, where the capacities of the inhabitants are narrow and limited, and very few virtues are remarked to expand and flouriſh; ſome traces of religion, ſome notions of an Omnipotent and Over-ruling Power, darkened as they may be by groſs ſuperſtition, are ſtill found to prevail. And even in the civilized country of France, where the impious abettors of the Revolution proceeded ſo far as to inſult the reaſon of an enlightened people, by compelling them to abjure their faith in their Creator and their Redeemer, how difficult has it been found to produce even external conformity to their decrees; and with what ardour are the people returning to the open profeſſion of Chriſtianity, now their rulers are fully aware of the expediency of its revival and public exerciſe! It appears therefore, that to inculcate thoſe principles of religious duty, which the mind naturally invites, and to improve its capacity for the reception of the moſt ſublime truths, is no more than a juſt attention and due obedience to the voice of Nature.

And as the truth of Chriſtianity is founded upon the ſtrongeſt arguments, and unites in the cloſeſt union our public and private, our temporal and eternal happineſs, it juſtly forms the groundwork of Education. The benevolent attributes of the great Creator—his power as the Author, and his goodneſs as the Governor of the univerſe—the bright image of the Saviour of the world, as repreſented by the holy Evangeliſts—his actions marked by the pureſt benevolence, his precepts tending immediately to the happineſs of man, and his promiſes capable of exciting the moſt exalted and moſt glorious hopes, are peculiarly calculated to ſtrike the imagination, and intereſt the ſenſibility of youth. Such ſublime topics, inculcated upon right principles, cannot fail to encourage thoſe ardent ſentiments of love, gratitude, and veneration, which are natural to ſuſceptible and tender minds. Since therefore the ſame principles which are congenial with the diſpoſitions of young men are moſt conducive to their happineſs; ſince, in ſhort, the evidences of CHRISTIANITY are miraculous;—ſince it is an expreſs revelation of the will of God, and as ſuch we can have no pretence to reject its proofs, and no right to reſiſt its claims to our obſervance; it muſt be unqueſtionably

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a ſubject of tranſcendent importance, and therefore ſtands as the *firſt* and *leading* topic of my work.

As the knowledge of LANGUAGE is intimately connected with every other kind of information, and as in the Languages of ancient GREECE and ROME are preſerved ſome of the nobleſt productions of human genius, I aſſign to theſe ſubjects the next place.

In recommendation of OUR OWN LANGUAGE it is ſuperfluous to have recourſe to arguments. All who are acquainted with it, foreigners as well as natives, muſt be convinced of its excellence, particularly as it is the vehicle of productions eminently diſtinguiſhed by Genius, Taſte, Learning, and Science.

And as Language ſhould be conſidered not merely as a channel to convey our thoughts upon common occaſions, but as capable of ornament to pleaſe, and of energy to perſuade mankind; and as ſuch improvements are both gratifying and beneficial to ſociety, proper attention is due to the ſtudy of ELOQUENCE.

The moſt celebrated of Roman Orators has

has remarked with great propriety of obſervation, that ignorance of the events and tranſactions of former times condemns us to a perpetual ſtate of childhood: from this condition of mental darkneſs we are reſcued by HISTORY, which ſupplies us with its friendly light to view the inſtructive events of paſt ages, and to collect wiſdom from the conduct of others. And as there are particular countries, from which we have derived the moſt important information in Religion, in Arts, in Sciences, and in Literature, we ought carefully to inſpect the pages of their intereſting records.

The moſt ancient people, of whom we have any authentic accounts, are the JEWS: to them was communicated, and by them was preſerved, the knowledge of the true God; while all other nations were ſunk in the moſt abject ſuperſtition, and diſgraced by the groſſeſt idolatry.

The writers of GREECE and ROME have recorded ſuch numerous and ſuch eminent inſtances of the genius, valour, and wiſdom of their countrymen, as have been the juſt ſubjects of admiration for all ſucceeding ages; for

for which reaſon the accounts of THEIR MEMORABLE TRANSACTIONS ought to be carefully inſpected before we proceed to ſurvey the HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPE, and OF OUR NATIVE COUNTRY.

As Reaſon is the nobleſt faculty of the human mind, it is of the higheſt importance to conſider its proper conduct and application, more eſpecially as upon its right direction in controlling the flights of the imagination, and abating the violence of the paſſions, depends the happineſs of life. That ſyſtem of LOGIC, therefore, which conſiſts not in abſtruſe terms, or argumentative ſubtlety, but in the manly exerciſe of the rational powers, juſtly claims an important place in every ſyſtem of education.

The various diſcoveries and improvements in SCIENCE and PHILOSOPHY conſtitute a peculiar diſtinction between ancient and modern times. Problems of ſcience, like the arguments of Logic, employ the mind in the moſt vigorous exerciſe of its powers, and confirm the habits of cloſe application, which are eſſentially neceſſary in the proſecution of every kind of ſtudy. Such are the reaſons

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for introducing and recommending due attention to the principles of the MATHEMATICS.

The human mind, not content with ſpeculations upon the properties of matter alone, delights to ſurvey the wonderful works of the GREAT CREATOR, as diſplayed in the various parts of the univerſe. This employment is a ſource of never-failing ſatisfaction to perſons of every age. The productions of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms are cloſely connected with the well-being, and are conducive to the ſubſiſtence of man; ſo that NATURAL HISTORY claims his particular attention.

And as the elegant Arts poſſeſs a pleaſing influence over the imagination, and furniſh a conſtant variety of amuſement and pleaſure, it is highly deſirable to examine the principles, and conſider the application of a refined and correct taſte to the beauties of PAINTING, POETRY, and MUSIC.

In the welfare and proſperity of his native country every Briton is deeply intereſted. The two great ſources of its ſupport, its opulence, and its glory, are AGRICULTURE and COM-

COMMERCE; to have a knowledge of their leading principles muſt be allowed to be ſingularly uſeful to an Engliſh gentleman.

Since it is a prevailing faſhion, particularly among the higher ranks of ſociety, to complete the courſe of education by viſiting foreign countries, it is uſeful to aſcertain the advantages, which may be derived from the practice of TRAVELLING.

As attainments derive their greateſt value from being directed to the purpoſes of active life, the qualifications requiſite for a right conduct in the learned profeſſions of LAW, PHYSIC, and DIVINITY, are taken into conſideration.

And laſtly, to point out the ſources, from which the reader may draw more complete information upon all the preceding ſubjects, the work is cloſed with liſts of THE MOST APPROVED AND INSTRUCTIVE BOOKS.

The *Order*, in which my *Claſſes* are diſpoſed, is adapted to the progreſs of the faculties of the mind, from childhood to riper years. The principles of Religion, of Language, and of Hiſtory, as engaging the memory,

mory, occupy the firſt place; and the elements of Science, Natural Hiſtory, and Taſte, together with the various ſtudies, which relate to the active ſcenes of life, as chiefly intereſting the powers of the underſtanding, cloſe the volumes of knowledge. The foundation of the building is deeply laid, and compoſed of the moſt ſolid materials; the ſuperſtructure, raiſed to a proper elevation, diſplays ornament, while it is adapted to convenience.

Such is the ſketch of my deſign, in which it is intended to trace the regular progreſs of application, from puerile to manly ſtudies— from elementary knowledge to profeſſional duties. It is ſufficiently finiſhed to ſhow, that the fields of inſtruction are not only fertile, but the moſt various in their productions. Some ſpots bring forth the immortal fruits of Religion, ſome the hardy plants of Science, and ſome the delicate flowers of Taſte. Here then the active temper of youth, and their fondneſs for change, may find ample means of gratification, wherever they chooſe to wander and expatiate. Light purſuits may divert, after ſevere ſtudies have fatigued the mind; and he who has been diligent to peruſe the records of hiſtory, to ſolve the pro-

blems of ſcience, or aſcertain the diſtinctions of logic, may find an agreeable relaxation in ſurveying the beauties of nature, charming his ear with the delightful ſtrains of muſic, pleaſing his eye with the fair creations of the pencil, or delighting his fancy with the fictions of poetry.

With reſpect to my choice of books, I wiſh it not to eſcape the obſervation of the reader, that I have rejected ſome works with as much readineſs as I have adopted others. Very few *Novels* will appear in my liſts, as I am well convinced of their pernicious tendency. If we take the moſt ſuperficial ſurvey of the Circulating Libraries, we may obſerve, that the ingenuity of our own authors is ſufficiently fertile in theſe flimſy and ſhort-lived publications; and yet Germany and France have contributed their aid to ſatisfy the craving appetite of the Britiſh public, with ſuch ſucceſs, that ſome of their productions are as popular as our own. It is to be lamented, that *moſt* Novels do no ſmall injury to the cauſe of ſound and wholeſome literature, as well as to that of morality. They vitiate the taſte of their readers, deſtroy their reliſh for uſeful books, and make the facts of hiſtory, and even the deſcriptions of poetry, appear

appear dull and inſipid. It were well if their bad effects terminated at this point: but as they are generally filled with licentious deſcriptions, improbable incidents, falſe ſentiments, and ſuch ſophiſtical arguments, as may ſerve to juſtify the moſt improper actions; they tend to excite a romantic ſenſibility, to enflame the paſſions, and corrupt the heart.

Let it likewiſe be carefully remarked, that I am under very few obligations to the founders of the new ſchool of *Philoſophiſm* in France. So far indeed from wiſhing to direct the attention of my readers to their works, it is my anxious deſire to caution them againſt the inſidious arts, the flimſy ſophiſtry, and the exceſſive arrogance of the modern French writers, particularly *Voltaire*, *Rouſſeau*, *D'Alembert*, *Diderot*, *Helvetius*, and *Volney*; and their admirers and diſciples, *Gibbon*, *Paine*, and *Godwin*. In direct and decided oppoſition to their ſpurious philoſophy, their abuſe of the powers of reaſon, their profligate and deluſive ſpeculations upon the momentous ſubjects of Religion, Morality, and Government, their folly in rejecting whatever is old, and their precipitation in embracing whatever is new, I avow my firm

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conviction, that there is no greater or more fruitful source of mischief and misery, than a wild, unrestrained ardour for innovation: I MAINTAIN THE TRUTH AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION, THE VALUE OF ANCIENT LEARNING, THE DIGNITY OF SCIENCE, AND THE EXCELLENCE OF THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION. And in order to provide the most efficacious antidote against the poison of their opinions, I recommend an intimate acquaintance with the eminent divines of the Church of England, such as CUDWORTH, BARROW, TILLOTSON, STILLINGFLEET, CLARKE, and PALEY; and with our great philosophers and moralists, BACON, LOCKE, BOYLE, NEWTON, ADDISON, and JOHNSON. These are the authors, whose understandings I reverence, to whose authority I bow, and whose immortal works I earnestly recommend. These are the writers, whom, in decided preference to all arrogant sciolists, and plausible infidels, I hold up to general attention, as the luminaries of useful knowledge, the teachers of genuine wisdom, and the true friends of mankind.

Such are the instructors, by whose assistance the student is advised to extend the sphere

of his application beyond profeſſional knowledge, and to cultivate ſome of the more open fields of uſeful and pleaſing inſtruction.

I conſider myſelf as aſſuming the office of a Guide to the youthful and inexperienced traveller, and as undertaking to point out the intereſting proſpects of a charming country, without aſpiring to the accuracy of a topographer, or the diligence of an antiquarian. I ſhall conduct him, who commits himſelf to my directions, from a low and narrow valley, where his views have been cloſely confined, to the ſummit of a lofty mountain: when he has reached the proper point of view, he will feel his faculties expand, he will breathe a purer air, enjoy a wider horizon, and obſerve woods, lakes, mountains, plains, and rivers, ſpreading beneath his feet in delightful proſpect. From this commanding eminence, I ſhall point out ſuch places as are moſt deſerving his reſearches; and finally, I ſhall recommend him to thoſe, who will prove more inſtructive, and more pleaſing companions, through the remaining part of his journey.

CLASS THE FIRST.

RELIGION.

CHAPTER I.

The Christian Religion.

THE seeds of religious knowledge are implanted in our minds during the earliest period of our lives. The notions of a Providence, and the various duties which we owe both to God, and to mankind, are inculcated long before our judgments are sufficiently matured to determine the reasonableness, or estimate the utility of moral and religious truth.

That the conduct of the instructors of children, in thus taking advantage of the curiosity and the pliability of the infant mind, is not the result of superstition and credulity, but of good sense, and a proper regard to its best interests, and most valuable improvement, will appear, when the powers of judgment

ment and discrimination are sufficiently strengthened by time to enable a young man to examine those principles, which he has been taught from his early years to hold venerable and sacred. To inquire on what account Christianity claims an ascendency over all other branches of knowledge, and what are the particular grounds upon which he believes it to be a divine Revelation, is a duty which he owes equally to his own reason, and to the dignity and importance of the subject itself.

"Revelation claims to be the voice of God, and our obligation to attend to his voice is surely moral in all cases. And as it is insisted that its evidence is conclusive, upon thorough consideration of it; so it offers itself to us with manifest obvious appearances of having something more than human in it, and therefore in all reason requires to have its claims most seriously examined into[a]."

Such an examination, conducted with that degree of care and attention, becoming the infinite importance of the subject, will clearly prove that the Christian Religion constitutes

[a] Butler's Analogy, p. 401.

beyond

beyond comparifon the moft ufeful and the moft tranfcendent part of our knowledge. It introduces us to an acquaintance with thofe fubjects, which are in the higheft degree defirable to be known; as it opens the cleareft profpect, that man in his prefent ftate can furvey, of that Being, who is the effence of all perfection, the centre of infinite excellence, and the fountain of inexhauftible wifdom, goodnefs, and power. The knowledge of created beings is low and trivial when compared to this; for however admirable they may be in their conftruction, however ufeful in their nature and properties, and however ftupendous in their frame and magnitude, they are ftill but faint fhadows and imperfect images of the glory of their Creator. The inftruction, which the Chriftian Religion conveys, is not only of the moft excellent kind, but its acquifition is above all things to be defired, efpecially when we confider the Almighty, with refpect to the wonders of his power, and the difpenfation of his Providence—when we view him by the clear light of the Chriftian Revelation, not only as the Maker and Governor of the univerfe, but as the Father of the Saviour of the world, whom he commiffioned to proclaim his divine will, to eftablifh the certainty of a fu-

ture ſtate, and to propoſe everlaſting happineſs to mankind, on condition of faith in a Redeemer, and obedience to his commands.

To know Chriſtianity is therefore both to underſtand what the Supreme Being has revealed for our greateſt good, and to aſcertain what conduct we ought to purſue in order to obtain his approbation and favour. How low therefore muſt the acquirements of learning and ſcience ſink in our opinion, when placed in oppoſition to religious knowledge! But when it forms the baſis, upon which they are built, they derive additional value as well as ſtability from its ſupport; they are conſecrated to the beſt purpoſes, and directed to their moſt ſalutary ends. Much as the knowledge of the ſcholar, and the ſpeculations of the philoſopher may elevate and enlarge the mind, and much as they may improve and adorn it, they extend not our proſpects beyond the world, they bound our views within the narrow limits of human life. But the knowledge of a Chriſtian takes a more exalted and a more certain aim; it reſpects a degree of felicity, which exceeds our utmoſt powers of conception, and a ſituation of pleaſure and delight without alloy, and without end—It relates to a ſtate of exiſtence,

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when the ſpirits of the juſt will be made perfect, and the tranſcendent bliſs of angels will be imparted to glorified and immortal man.

Such being the excellence of Chriſtianity, and ſuch the important end, which it propoſes, every perſon, who deſires to be fully acquainted with divine truth, and to build his happineſs upon the moſt ſolid baſis, will take, with the greateſt ſatisfaction, a particular and diſtinct view of its nature and evidences. Then will he avoid the imputation of being a Chriſtian merely in compliance with the prejudices of his parents, or the cuſtoms of his native country; and he will become one in conſequence of a rational preference, and a proper examination[b]. His conviction of its truth will then be ſolid and clear; he will plainly perceive the ſtrength of its

[b] "Beſides his particular calling for the ſupport of this life, every one has a concern in a future life, which he is bound to look after. This engages his thoughts in religion; and here it mightily lies upon him to underſtand, and reaſon right. Men therefore cannot be excuſed from underſtanding the word, and framing the general notions relating to Religion right. Great advancements might be made in knowledge of all kinds, eſpecially in that of the great-

its foundations, and fully underſtand the extent of its advantages: he will be perſuaded that it bears the character and ſtamp of divinity, and that it has every claim to the reception of mankind, which a divine Revelation can reaſonably be expected to poſſeſs.

The proofs of the truth of the Chriſtian Revelation are numerous, clear, and concluſive. The moſt obvious and ſtriking are thoſe which ariſe; I. From the AUTHENTICITY OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. II. THE CHARACTER OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR. III. The PROPHECIES of which he was the ſubject, as well as thoſe which he delivered. IV. HIS MIRACLES. V. THE SUBLIME MORALITY OF HIS PRECEPTS. And, VI. THE RAPID AND EXTENSIVE PROPAGATION OF HIS RELIGION under circumſtances the moſt hoſtile to its advancement.

greateſt concern and largeſt views, if men would make a right uſe of their faculties, and ſtudy their own underſtandings." Locke on the Conduct of the Underſtanding, p. 398. vol. iii. fol.

The happy effects that reſult from early religious inſtruction are deſcribed with his accuſtomed eloquence, by Dr. Parr, in his Diſcourſe on Education. See p. 13, &c.

I. *The*

I. *The Authenticity of the Books of the New Testament.*

The New Teftament is the fource, from which the knowledge of the Chriftian fyftem is derived. That the Gofpels and the Acts of the Apoftles were written by St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, neither Gentiles nor Jews have ever been fo hardy as to deny. The fecond Epiftle of St. Peter indeed, the Epiftles of St. James and St. Jude, the two Epiftles of St. John, the Epiftle to the Hebrews, and the Revelation of St. John, were not received at firft by all the congregations of Chriftians. As foon however as their authenticity was made known, they were admitted into the Canon of Scripture. That the Gofpels are the fame in every article of the fmalleft importance, as they were when firft publifhed by their refpective authors, there can be no doubt; as they have been preferved through every fucceffive age with the greateft care. From the time of the Apoftles to the prefent hour, even thofe fects of Chriftians, that have been the moft at variance upon other points, have concurred in guarding them with equal diligence, and have held them in equal veneration. The proofs of their genuinenefs are more numerous than can be adduced in favour of any

 other

other ancient book. Every relation of a fact is marked by an exact particularity of names, perſons, times, and places, that can in any degree throw light upon the ſubject, and eſtabliſh its truth. The hiſtory, the manners, and the opinions of the times, as they may be collected from all other accounts, harmonize with the narratives of the ſacred Writers, and corroborate their general veracity. The Evangeliſts were placed in ſituations the moſt favourable for obtaining complete and authentic information. St. Matthew and St. John, two of the diſciples of our Lord, heard his divine inſtructions from his own mouth, beheld his aſtoniſhing miracles, and attended him during the whole courſe of his miniſtry. They drew their accounts from an intimate knowledge of perſons, and a lively recollection of facts. St. Mark and St. Luke are entitled to all the credit of contemporary Biographers, as they were enabled to trace the truth to its ſource, in conſequence of living in habits of the cloſeſt intimacy with thoſe who had ſeen and converſed with our Lord. Few of thoſe hiſtorians, whoſe works we moſt eſteem, and whoſe fidelity we moſt reſpect, were ſo nearly connected with the ſubject of their writings, or poſſeſſed ſuch ample means of genuine information. Any one of the Evangeliſts was

perfectly well qualified to record the History of Christ, and to satisfy us as to its truth upon his own credit only; and all of them taken together, and combining their accumulated strength, form a body of evidence sufficient to remove the scruples of every candid mind, and to establish the truth upon a solid and lasting foundation.

We may assert with the most perfect confidence and truth, that so far from there being any traces extant of a History of Christ and his followers, contradictory to that of the Evangelists, there is not a contemporary, or a subsequent writer, whether Jewish or Pagan, who adverts to the subject at all, who does not confirm the leading facts of the Gospel History.

The New Testament likewise contains Epistles written by the holy persons, who were engaged in preaching the Gospel immediately after the ascension of their divine Master. These Epistles refer continually to the original facts contained in the Gospels, and confirm their truth. A perfect harmony of design is evident both in the one and the other. They prescribe the same rule of faith—They inculcate the same articles to be believed, and the

the ſame precepts to be obeyed. They contain many ſtriking references to the labours, which[c] St. Paul, the great Apoſtle of the Gentiles, underwent; and the peculiar energy and earneſtneſs, with which he addreſſed his converts, have all the marks of ſeriouſneſs and ſincerity, which can give to any writings whatever the ſtamp of originality[d]. All theſe Epiſtles, when taken together, are not to be conſidered as compoſing a ſingle evidence only, but as containing diſtinct and independent atteſtations of the truth of Chriſtianity; for it is evident from their contents, that they were written by different perſons, at various times, and upon various occaſions. Even the little circumſtances in which they differ from each other have their uſe, as they tend to

[c] See the animated and affecting deſcription of his ſufferings, 2 Cor. xi. &c.

[d] The proofs of the genuineneſs of the Epiſtles deduced from remarkable coincidences, and cloſe though not ſtudied connection with the Goſpel Hiſtory, as well as from alluſions to particular incidents, perſons, times, and places, are ſtated by Dr. Paley, with great preciſion and clearneſs. See more particularly his Horæ Paulinæ, p. 11, 14, 34, 169, 216, 312. A new argument in favour of the Epiſtles is drawn from the erroneous ſubſcriptions to ſix of them, p. 380. He concludes with a ſhort view of the external Evidence, p. 386, 403. And gives ſome ſtriking remarks on the Talents, Character, and Conduct of St. Paul, p. 411.

prove,

prove, that there was no plan preconcerted by the writers, with a view to excite wonder and obtain credit by any ſtudied uniformity of repreſentation.

He who peruſes the Goſpels and Epiſtles with attention, muſt be ſtruck by a remarkable peculiarity of narrative and argument, which runs through every part of them. There is no appearance of artifice or duplicity in the ſacred Writers; no endeavour to raiſe the reputation of friends, or depreciate the characters of enemies. There is no effort made to reconcile the mind of the reader to what is marvellous in their narrative; no ſtudied attempt to fire his imagination, or rouſe his paſſions in their cauſe. All is fair, temperate, and candid. Vain, it is true, were the ſearch for thoſe ornaments which diſtinguiſh the claſſical writers: but ſtill in their works there is frequently a pleaſing ſimplicity, and ſometimes a ſublimity of expreſſion, although theſe beauties ſeem rather to riſe naturally out of the ſubject, than to reſult from the labour of compoſition, or any choice or arrangement of words. One circumſtance there is, in which the New Teſtament riſes to an elevation, which no other book can reach. Here preſides the majeſty of pure

and unfullied truth, which ſhines in unadorned but awful ſtate, and never turns aſide to the blandiſhments of flattery, or liſtens to the whiſpers of prejudice, or defamation. Here alone ſhe invariably ſupports the ſame dignified and uniform character, and points with equal impartiality to Peter now profeſſing his unalterable fidelity, and now denying his Lord;—to the Apoſtles at one time deſerting Chriſt, and at another, hazarding their lives by the bold profeſſion of his Goſpel. And theſe plain characters of truth afford the cleareſt evidence of the inſpiration of the ſacred books. The Holy Spirit, whoſe aſſiſtance was promiſed to his diſciples by their heavenly Maſter, guarded them from error in their narratives, in the ſtatement of their precepts, and the developement of their doctrines. Upon ſuch momentous points, as contribute to form an infallible rule and ſtandard of faith and practice, they were guided by the divine wiſdom, and thus are raiſed to a degree of authority and credibility unattainable by all other writers[c].

" It doth not appear, that ever it came

[c] See Gibſon's Paſtoral Letters in the Enchiridion Theologicum, vol. iv. p. 235.

into

into the mind of theſe writers, how this or the other action would appear to mankind, or what objections might be raiſed upon them. But without at all attending to this, they lay the facts before you, at no pains to think, whether they would appear credible or not. If the reader will not believe their teſtimony, there is no help for it: they tell the truth, and attend to nothing elſe. Surely this looks like ſincerity, and that they publiſhed nothing to the world, but what they believed themſelves[f]."

An inquiry into the authenticity of the books of the New Teſtament is of great importance. If they are as ancient as they are reputed to be; if they were certainly written by the perſons to whom they are aſcribed, and have all the requiſite characters of genuineneſs, we may venture to aſſert with confidence, that the facts contained in them are undeniably and ſubſtantially true. For ſuppoſing ſuch actions as have been attributed to Chriſt never to have been performed, ſo great muſt have been the effrontery, as well as the ingenuity, of the fabricators of this impoſture, if they proceeded to publiſh as true what

[f] Duchal, quoted by Paley, vol. ii. p. 182.

they

they knew to be falſe, as to exceed the bounds of belief: and if, even for the ſake of argument only, we ſuppoſe them to have combined in a confederacy for ſuch a purpoſe, what would have been the conſequence? They would only have given the deſired advantage to their acute, active, and implacable enemies, who would quickly have detected the falſehood, ſacrificed the abettors of it to their juſt indignation, and ſtigmatized the Chriſtian Religion for ever as an impoſture and a fable.

II. *The Character of our Lord.*

This character, as repreſented in the plain and energetic narratives of the Evangeliſts, is marked by qualities the moſt extraordinary, and the moſt tranſcendent. Every deſcription of every other perſonage, whether embelliſhed by the fancy of the poet, or pourtrayed by the accuracy of the hiſtorian, leaves it evidently without an equal, in the annals of mankind.

If the conduct of thoſe who bear a reſemblance to Chriſt as the founders of religious eſtabliſhments be examined, theſe aſſertions will receive the fulleſt confirmation. They

all

all accommodated their plans to human policy, and private intereſt—to exiſting tenets of ſuperſtition, and to prevailing habits of life. The Chriſtian Lawgiver, more ſublime in his object, and more pure in his motives, aimed at no recommendation of his precepts by courting the prejudices, or flattering the paſſions of mankind. The inſtitutions of Numa the ſecond King of the Romans, of Brama the Lawgiver of the various tribes of India, and of Confucius the great Philoſopher of China, were evidently adapted to the exiſting habits, and prevailing inclinations of their people. They ſeem indeed to have been founded altogether upon them. Mahomet, the great impoſtor of Arabia, accommodated the rules of his Koran, and the rewards of his paradiſe, to the manners and deſires of a warlike and a ſenſual people. In his character and conduct he preſented a ſtriking contraſt to Chriſt. Ambition and luſt were the reigning paſſions of his ſoul. He maintained, that he received his Koran from heaven: but its frivolous and abſurd contents ſufficiently indicate the falſehood of his pretenſions. With a degree of effrontery ſtill more impious, he pleaded a divine authority for the boundleſs gratification of his paſſions; and, unable to appeal to miracles,

which

which give the moſt certain proofs of a teacher ſent from God, he propagated his faith by force, and reared his bloody creſcent amid captives, who were the victims of his paſſions, and cities that were deſolated by his ſword[g].

In

[g] "Mahometaniſm is a borrowed ſyſtem, made up for the moſt part of Judaiſm and Chriſtianity, and, if it be conſidered in the moſt favourable view, might poſſibly be accounted a ſort of Chriſtian Hereſy. If the Goſpel had never been preached, it may be queſtioned whether Mahometaniſm would have exiſted. Its author was an ignorant knave and a fanatic, who had neither ſkill nor genius to form a religion out of his own head." Jortin's Sermons, vol. vii. p. 369.

See Paley's Evidences, vol. iii. p. 70. ſect. ii. Taylor's Moral Demonſtrations, vol. ii. p. 383. and Prideaux's Life of Mahomet.

The contraſt between our Lord and the Prophet of Arabia is drawn in a ſtyle of ſuch rich and appropriate eloquence by Sherlock, that I cannot deny myſelf the pleaſure of preſenting it to my readers.

"Make the appeal to natural religion, or, which is the ſame thing, to the reaſon of man. Set before her Mahomet, and his diſciples arrayed in armour and in blood, riding in triumph over the ſpoils of thouſands and tens of thouſands, who fell by his victorious ſword. Shew her the cities which he ſet in flames, the countries which he ravaged and deſtroyed, and the miſerable diſtreſs of all the inhabitants of the earth. When ſhe has viewed him in this ſcene, carry her into his retirements; ſhew her the prophet's chamber, his wives and concubines; let her ſee

his

In the character of Christ we behold the most complete and prompt resignation to the will of God. So pure and so perfect was the whole tenour of his conduct, as to defy calumny, although it excited jealousy, and inflamed malice. His most bitter and inveterate enemies, even when solicited and encouraged by their unjust and prejudiced governors to indulge the licentiousness of false accusation, dared not make the slightest attack upon his moral character. He was

his adulteries, and hear him alledge revelation and his divine commission to justify his lust and oppression. When she is tired with this scene, then shew her the blessed Jesus, humble and meek; doing good to all the souls of men, patiently instructing both the ignorant and perverse. Let her see him in his most retired privacies; let her follow him to the mount, and hear his devotions and supplications to his God. Carry her to his table, to view his poor fare, and hear his heavenly discourse. Let her see him injured, but not provoked. Let her attend him to the tribunal, and consider the patience with which he endured the scoffs and reproaches of his enemies. Lead her to the cross, and let her view him in the agonies of death, and hear his last prayer for his persecutors; *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!*—When natural religion hath viewed both, ask her, which is the prophet of God?—But her answer we have already heard, when she saw part of this scene through the eyes of the centurion who attended at the cross: by him she spoke, and said, *Truly this was the Son of God.*" Sherlock's Ninth Discourse, vol. i.

equally

equally ſree from the ambition of an impoſtor, and the infatuation of an enthuſiaſt; for when the people ſought to place the crown of Iſrael on his head, he conveyed himſelf away by a miracle. Whenever he condeſcended to diſcourſe upon any important point, or to anſwer any objections of his adverſaries, he overcame their oppoſition with the irreſiſtible power of truth, and his words were the words of unerring wiſdom. Upon all occaſions he diſplayed the ſoundneſs and moderation of calm judgment, and the ſteadineſs of heroic intrepidity. There was no wild enthuſiaſm in his devotions, no rigid auſterity in his conduct, no frivolous ſubtlety or intemperate vehemence in his arguments. Of all the virtues, which adorned his mind, and gave a reſiſtleſs grace and lovelineſs to every action of his life, humility, patience, and the moſt ardent and univerſal love of mankind, were, upon every occaſion, predominant. The perfect benevolence of his character, indeed, is fully evinced by the tendency of his miracles, which, far from being prejudicial and vindictive, were directed to ſome beneficial end. His courage was equally remote from oſtentation and from raſhneſs, and his meekneſs and condeſcenſion never make him appear abject. Tried by the

the greateſt afflictions of life, aſſailed by hunger, expoſed to poverty, deſerted by his friends, and condemned to ſuffer an ignominious death, he is never degraded; the greatneſs of his character is in no reſpect diminiſhed—he preſerves the ſame air of mildneſs and dignity, and appears in the ſame highly venerable light as the Saviour of the world, who ſubmits to an ignoble ſtation, and conceals his majeſty in an humble garb, for the moſt important purpoſes. It is thus the glorious proſpects of nature are ſometimes enveloped in the miſts of the morning, or the great luminary of day is deprived of his beams and his brightneſs, by the temporary darkneſs of an eclipſe.

And here let us pauſe to admire the *manner* in which this moſt ſublime of all characters is introduced to us. We are not left to form an idea of it from vague accounts or looſe panegyric, but from actions and events; and this circumſtance proves undeniably the veracity of the Biographers of our Lord. The qualities of his mind are diſplayed by a detail of actions, the more ſtriking as they are more exact. All his actions are left to recommend themſelves by their own intrinſic merit, to captivate by their unaffected

 beauty,

beauty, and to ſhine by their native luſtre. The Evangeliſts have no where profeſſedly drawn an elaborate or highly finiſhed character of the Saviour of the world. We are not told in a vague and indefinite manner, that he was eminently bountiful, compaſſionate, or wiſe. It is no where expreſſed in terms of general aſſertion, that he poſſeſſed the greateſt virtues that can adorn and dignify the nature of man; or that he was endued with a power to controul, or to counteract the general laws of nature. But theſe inferences we are fully enabled to draw from regular ſtatements of facts. We learn from lively and affecting anecdotes diſtinctly and circumſtantially related, among many other aſtoniſhing inſtances of his divine power, that with a portion of food, the moſt diſproportionate to their wants, he ſatisfied the hungry multitudes in the wilderneſs, that he calmed the violence of a ſtorm at a word, and raiſed the ſon of the widow to life[h].

Ignorant and illiterate as the Evangeliſts were, they have drawn a character ſuperior to any that is elſewhere to be met with in the hiſtory of mankind. This character they

[h] Matt. xiv. Mark iv. Luke vii.

were

were no leſs unable than unwilling to invent: the only method of ſolving this difficulty is to acknowledge that they wrote from the immediate impreſſions of reality. They ſaw, they converſed with the Saviour of mankind, and heard from his ſacred lips the words of eternal life. They felt the power of truth upon their minds, and they exhibited it with proportionable clearneſs and ſtrength. To ſtate well-known facts, and record the leſſons of divine Revelation, was the ſole object of their labours. Hence they were conſiſtent as well as circumſtantial and accurate; and their uniformity of repreſentation is an additional proof of the reality of the perſon deſcribed, as their divine Maſter. Every particular is introduced in an artleſs and undeſigning manner; and this circumſtance itſelf, of not bringing our Lord forward in an oſtentatious point of view, affords a remarkable evidence to confirm the truth of the Goſpels. To complete the perfection of his character, his conduct was the exact counterpart of his inſtructions. He preſented to the world that lively image of moral perfection, which had indeed filled and elevated the imagination of Plato and Cicero; but which the ancient philoſophers in the wideſt circle of their obſervation had ſought for in vain. The heavenly

heavenly Teacher not only ſpoke as never man ſpoke, with reſpect to the ſublime leſſons, which he taught, the lively images, by which he illuſtrated, and the awful and impreſſive manner, in which he inculcated them[i]; but at once to combine the efficacy of example with the perfection of precept, became the unerring guide to all that was pious, all that was amiable, and all that was truly and intrinſically great.

With reſpect to the nature of his inſtructions, and his mode of teaching, how admirably did he adapt himſelf to the habits, capacities, and diſpoſitions of his hearers! "Parable and allegory have ever been thought the moſt agreeable means of communicating advice. The ſeverity of the precept is loſt in the entertainment of the fable. The ſenſible image reflects a light upon the moral thought, and the abſtract thought gives an importance to the ſenſible repreſentation. By apt ſimilitude therefore drawn from the

[i] See a neat and ingenious ſermon on our Saviour's manner of teaching, p. 279 of Diſcourſes on the Goſpel, by Townſon; Biſhop Taylor's Moral Demonſtration, publiſhed in the Scholar armed, vol. ii. p. 356; Hunter's Obſervations on the Hiſtory of Jeſus Chriſt; and Newcome on our Lord's Conduct.

ſurrounding objects did this great Teacher recommend to his hearers the moſt ſolemn truths and important precepts. The honeſt and teachable mind was thus allured to ſearch after divine knowledge, while the proud and obſtinate ſcorned the trouble of inquiring into the eaſy meaning of the figures he uſed. Thus did his inſtructions become, what all addreſſes to free and reaſoning beings ought, a part of trial and diſcipline; ſo that they who were well diſpoſed might receive improvement and advantage, and the hard-hearted might hear, and not underſtand.

"With what graceful eaſe, and yet ſolemn compoſure, does he accommodate himſelf to the converſation of all ſorts of perſons! Among the wiſe and learned how does he ſhine in communicating clear and important truth, confuting their artificial ſophiſms, and ſilencing their malicious cavils! Among the illiterate how does he condeſcend to the meanneſs of their underſtandings, and adapt his inſtructions to their apprehenſion and uſual train of thinking, raiſing his reflections from the preſent objects, and improving upon the moſt common occaſions! Even women and children are noticed by the wiſeſt of Teachers: and with reaſon, for no well-diſ-

 poſed

poſed human mind is of little conſequence: whatever it is at preſent, it is in the way to be hereafter great and glorious. The character, in ſhort, which the Saviour of the world aſſumed, ſeems to have been equally ſublime and amiable[k]."

He who reflects with due attention and reverence upon the dignity, purity, and holineſs of this divine character, will be ſenſible of the great difficulty of doing juſtice to the ſubject, as the Saviour of the world is preſented to our obſervation, in a manner ſo peculiarly venerable and awful. The inſpired Apoſtles and Evangeliſts can alone ſatisfy our inquiries concerning him; and every other writer, conſcious of his own incapacity to conceive, and his want of eloquence to deſcribe ſuch unparalleled excellence, muſt point to the lively and expreſſive portrait, which they alone, who ſaw the original, were qualified to draw.

It is reaſonable to expect that ſo extraordinary a perſonage, diſtinguiſhed as he was by every moral and intellectual quality, muſt neceſſarily make his teſtimony concerning

[k] Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature, p. 524.

himſelf

himſelf perfectly credible. The poſitive and direct proofs of his divine miſſion are equally founded upon the prophecies, which foretold the moſt remarkable circumſtances of his birth, life, and death, and upon the miracles by which he proved to demonſtration, that he was the promiſed Meſſiah of the Jews, the Mediator of a new covenant between God and man, and a divine Teacher ſent to reform and ſave a guilty world.

III. *The Prophecies.*

The Old Teſtament contains a long ſeries of predictions, which are expreſſed with greater diſtinctneſs, and marked with a more ſtriking and appropriate reference to a particular train of events, in proportion as the Prophets approached more nearly to the time of the Meſſiah. As he was the great object of the general expectation of the Jews, ſo was he the great end of the Prophecies. Sometimes he is portrayed as the innocent, patient, and unrepining ſufferer, pierced with grief, and ſinking under unmerited calamity for the ſake of mankind; and ſometimes with all the fervour and vivid colours of Oriental poetry are deſcribed his temporal grandeur,

grandeur, the tranſcendent attributes of his divine character, and the glory and eternity of his kingdom. Theſe ſurpriſing intimations that occur in the Prophets of various ages, like rays of light proceeding from different quarters, all meet in the ſame point, and illuminate the ſame object. Here is none of that latitude of interpretation, or ambiguity of expreſſion, in which the oracles of the heathens were conveyed. The hiſtory of Chriſt, as related by the Evangeliſts, may be conſidered as an enlarged and finiſhed copy of the Prophecies, and the Prophecies themſelves as the original ſketches. The proportions and the outlines are uniformly preſerved, and faithfully delineated. The colours indeed are more diſtinct and glowing, the figures have their juſt animation, but ſtill their character and expreſſion are the ſame[1]. Ineffectual have been the endeavours of the

[1] Stillingfleet's Orig. Sacræ, book ii. chap. v, &c. Paley's Evidences, vol. ii. p. 67. Grotius de Veritate, lib. v. c. 17, 18. Gibſon's Paſtoral Letters, vol. iv. p. 52. of the Enchiridion Theologicum. Jortin's Remarks, vol. i. p. 73, 74. Prideaux's Connections, vol. ii. p. 161. Joſephus de Bello Judaico, lib. vi. c. 4. ſect. 5, 6, 7, 8. compared with the predictions that relate to the Temple, as recorded by the Evangeliſts.

Jews to pervert the true meaning of theſe Prophecies; their literal ſenſe is peculiarly applicable to our Lord, and to him alone they muſt neceſſarily be referred. Without miſtaking their object, or perverting their clear and obvious ſenſe, they cannot be applied to any other perſon whatever. Whilſt theſe predictions ſtrike the mind of an attentive reader of Scripture, with various degrees of evidence, there are ſome of them which cannot fail to impreſs him with the fulleſt conviction, as they immediately relate to the miſſion, miracles, and character, as well as the exact time of the coming of Chriſt. Iſaiah and Daniel more eſpecially ſeem rather to deſcribe the paſt as Hiſtorians, than to anticipate the future as Prophets. We know, from the authority of Scripture, that multitudes of Jews, who had diligently ſtudied the Prophecies from their youth, and acknowledged their divine authority, felt the force of their application to our Lord. And, not to appeal to other inſtances, we alſo know that the fifty-third chapter of Iſaiah, ſo circumſtantially deſcriptive of the ſuffering Meſſiah, effected the converſion of the Eunuch of Ethiopia, mentioned in the Acts of the Apoſtles, and contributed greatly to produce a conviction

tion of the truth of Christianity in the mind of the profligate Lord Rochester[m].

The records, which contain these Prophecies, have been most carefully preserved even by the enemies of Christianity. Such are the Jews, whose religious belief is founded upon an acknowledgment of the divine inspiration of the Prophets. Hence they are undesignedly the supporters of that faith, to which they are confessedly hostile. A wide difference of opinion has prevailed among them in various ages; for their interpretations of the Prophets, before the coming of the Messiah, agreed much better with those of the Christians, than any they have given since the establishment of Christianity. And it is very much to the purpose repeat-

[m] This fact is recorded by Bishop Burnet. "To him Lord Rochester laid open with great freedom the tenor of his opinions, and the course of his life, and from him he received such conviction of the reasonableness of moral duty, and the truth of Christianity, as produced a total change both of his manners and opinions. The account of those salutary conferences is given by Burnet in a book, intituled, Some Passages of the Life and Death of John Earl of Rochester; which the critic ought to read for its elegance, the philosopher for its arguments, and the saint for its piety." Johnson's Life of Rochester, vol. iv. p. 6. 12mo.

edly to take notice, that whatever conſtruction they have put upon the words of the Prophecies, they have never raiſed any doubt, or brought any arguments to invalidate their authenticity.

As the divine miſſion of Chriſt received ſuch ſupport from the prophecies, of which he was the ſubject; ſo it is very ſtrongly confirmed by thoſe events, which he foreſaw and foretold. He clearly deſcribed the manner of his own death, with many particular circumſtances—the place where it was ordained to happen—the treacherous method by which he was to be betrayed into the hands of the Jewiſh governors, and given up to the Roman power—the cruel and unbecoming treatment he was to ſuffer, and the exact period of time that ſhould elapſe from his death to his reſurrection. Such was preciſely the train of events, as they are related at large by the Evangeliſts, and as thoſe events were atteſted by the full acknowledgment and confeſſion of the firſt martyrs, who ſealed their belief with their blood. The Saviour of mankind ſpeaks of future events without heſitation, not as things merely probable, but abſolutely certain. He does not ſhadow them out in vague and ambiguous terms; but marks them in their riſe, progreſs, and effects, in the

clearest

clearest and most circumstantial descriptions. The interval, between the prediction and its accomplishment, seems in his view to be annihilated; his penetrating mind pierces the veil of futurity, and the distant allusions of the Prophet are converted into the clear prospect of the spectator. Even at the time when Judea was in complete subjection to the Roman power, when a strong garrison kept its capital in awe, and rebellion against their conquerors, who had at that time the empire of the world, appeared as improbable as it was fruitless; he deplored the fall of the holy city, and pointed out the advance of the Roman standard, as the token of desolation, and the signal for his followers to save themselves, by flight, from captivity and destruction. At the time too when the temple of Jerusalem was held in the highest veneration by all foreigners, as well as Jews, what were the immediate observations of our Lord, when his disciples directed his attention, in terms of wonder and astonishment, to the vast and solid materials, of which that magnificent edifice was built? He lamented its approaching fall, and declared in explicit terms, that so complete should be its demolition, that not one stone should be left upon another. At a time likewise when the number of his followers was limited to a few fishermen of

Galilee,

Galilee, and when he ſeemed deſtitute of every means to accompliſh his purpoſe, he predicted the wide diffuſion of the faith; and expreſsly proclaimed, that before the threatened calamities overwhelmed the Jews, and ſubverted their empire, his goſpel ſhould be preached among all nations[n].

The events, which happened about thirty years after the aſcenſion of our Lord, completely verified theſe Prophecies. From the books of the New Teſtament, and particularly from the Acts of the Apoſtles, may be collected the fulleſt inſtances of the diligence and zeal, with which the new religion was in a ſhort time diſſeminated.

But Chriſtians can appeal to an independent train of witneſſes—to Jewiſh and to prophane authors, for circumſtantial accounts of the fulfilment of our Lord's predictions. The hiſtorian Joſephus, deſcended from the family, which bore the ſacred office of High Prieſt, a diſtinguiſhed general in the early part of the laſt Jewiſh war, has given a par-

[n] See "Hiſtory the Interpreter of Prophecy," for the illuſtration of this ſubject at large; a work to which I refer with the leſs reſerve, as the public have received it with approbation.

ticular

ticular and exact confirmation of every circumstance. With singular care he has avoided to mention the name of Christ, and yet with singular precision he has illustrated his predictions relative to the destruction of Jerusalem. The important service he has thus rendered to Christianity is wholly unintentional. What he relates is drawn from him by the power of irresistible truth, and is a testimony far more strong, and more unexceptionable, than an explicit mention of the name of Christ, and a laboured encomium on his words and actions.

The curious details of Josephus, in his History of the Wars of the Jews, are confirmed by Tacitus, Philostratus, and Dion Cassius. It is probable they were all of them unacquainted with the works of the Jewish Historian; and yet they corroborate his account, and all unite to illustrate the Prophecies of our Lord.

IV. *The Miracles of our Lord.*

The most illustrious evidence of the divine origin of Christianity, and that evidence to which its great Author most confidently appealed, when called upon to prove the authority

rity of his miſſion conſiſted in the exerciſe of miraculous powers. The miracles of Chriſt were ſo frequent, that they could not be the effects of chance; ſo public, that they could not be the contrivance of fraud and impoſture; ſo inſtantaneous, that they could not reſult from any preconcerted ſcheme; and ſo beneficial in their immediate conſequences, and ſo conducive to propagate the ſalutary truths he taught, that they could not proceed from the agency of evil ſpirits. They muſt therefore have been effected by the interpoſition of that divine power, to which Chriſt himſelf attributed them. Our Lord did not come according to the expectation of the Jews, as the conqueror of their enemies, to diſplay his policy in council, and his courage in the field: but he was inveſted with powers, that enabled him to triumph over the works of darkneſs, and ſuſpend the laws of nature. The frequent and public exerciſe of thoſe powers was eſſential to his character as a teacher ſent from God, ſo that miracles were the fulleſt and moſt ſatisfactory credentials of his divine miſſion[o].

This

[o] "The evidence of our Saviour's miſſion from heaven is ſo great, in the multitude of miracles he did, before all ſorts of people, (which the divine providence and wiſdom has

This divine Perſonage, whoſe manifeſtation to the world was preceded by ſuch a regular train of prophecies; who inſtantaneouſly cured inveterate diſeaſes, and at whoſe word even the dead aroſe; whoſe mind was adorned with conſummate wiſdom, and whoſe conduct was diſtinguiſhed by every virtue; deſcended from heaven to deliver a perfect rule of faith and practice, and taught thoſe important and indiſpenſable leſſons of duty, which are eſſentially neceſſary to the preſent and future happineſs of mankind.

V. *Chriſtian Ethics,*
Or the Precepts of our Lord.

The precepts of Chriſtianity form the moſt complete, moſt intelligible, and moſt uſeful

has ſo ordered, that they never were, nor could be denied by any of the enemies and oppoſers of Chriſtianity) that what he delivered cannot but be received as the oracles of God." Locke.

"Once believe that there is a God, and miracles are not incredible." Paley's View, vol. i. p. 13. vol. iii. p. 236-7, &c. Jortin's Remarks, vol. i. p. 259—267. Conybeare on the Nature, Poſſibility, and Certainty of Miracles, Enchiridion Theologicum, vol. iii. p. 153.

"All theſe miracles ſpeak more goodneſs than power, and do not ſo much ſurpriſe the beholders, as touch their hearts." Boſſuet, Univ. Hiſt. p. 253.

ſyſtem of Ethics, or moral philoſophy. The ſtandard of duty, which is ſet up in the Goſpel, is agreeable to our natural notions of the Supreme Being, and is calculated to correct our errors, to exalt our affections, to purify our hearts, and enlighten our underſtandings. The motives, by which Chriſt enforces the practice of his laws, are conſiſtent with the wiſdom of the Almighty, and correſpondent to the expectations of rational beings. He who duly weighs the effects of the Chriſtian duties, and remarks how they contribute to reſtore man to the original dignity of his nature, will be led to conclude, that they form an indiſpenſable part of a religion coming from God, becauſe they are in every reſpect conſiſtent with his wiſdom, mercy, and goodneſs.

To view the moral part of the Chriſtian diſpenſation in a proper light, it ought to be compared with the principles of ancient Philoſophy.

The ſages of Greece and Rome undoubtedly preſent us with the moſt convincing proofs how far unenlightened reaſon could advance in the examination of moral obligation, and the diſcovery of the duties of man.

 But

But imperfection, if not error, was attached to all their systems.

If moral wisdom descended from heaven to dwell with Socrates, the most enlightened sage of the heathen world, she quickly caught the contagion of earthly depravity, and forgot her dignity so far as to bend at the shrine of superstition. Her dictates were not built upon any certain foundations, or digested into a consistent plan. They were disgraced with false notions, intermixed with frivolous refinements, and scattered among discordant sects of philosophers. Each sect of philosophers had a different idea of happiness, and a different mode of investigating truth[p]. Each of their schools had its peculiar dogmas; and the followers of Plato, Zeno, and Aristotle, exerted the powers of their minds, rather to display their ingenuity, than to satisfy the inquiries of mankind, as to the nature, the principles, and the end of moral obligation. The powerful influence of example, and the strong and awakening voice of some great and divine authority, were wanted to give to their instructions the energy of law. But

[p] See Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity, vol. ii. p. 532. fol.

the

the moſt material obſtacle to a ready compliance with the dictates of heathen morality, was the want of ſuch ſanctions as hold the mind in the moſt permanent ſubjection, by immediately addreſſing its hopes and fears.

And here we remark likewiſe the higher degree of perfection, which Chriſtianity poſſeſſes with reſpect to its characteriſtic precepts. To the Goſpel of Chriſt we are indebted for thoſe rules of conduct, which enjoin the ſacrifice of ſelf-intereſt, ſelfiſh pleaſures, and vain-glory. By it alone we are taught in the moſt explicit language, and in the moſt authoritative manner, to forgive injuries, to love our enemies, to reſiſt the firſt impulſe of evil deſires, to cultivate true humility and univerſal benevolence, and to prefer the joys of heaven to the pleaſures and occupations of the world. Advancing to a degree of improvement far beyond the leſſons of heathen morality, far beyond what was ever taught under the porches of Athens, or in the groves of the Academy; we are inſtructed to entertain the moſt awful veneration for the Deity, and to expreſs the moſt lively gratitude for his mercies; we are ſupported by the firmeſt reliance on his grace, and we are invited upon all occaſions to re-

ſort in earneſt and fervent ſupplications to his power, mercy, and goodneſs, for the ſupply of our numerous wants, for the pardon of our ſins, for ſecurity in the midſt of danger, and for ſupport at the hour of death.

Having a perfect model of virtue in the conduct of our bleſſed Lord ſet before us, and a perfect rule of life propoſed in his divine inſtructions, we are taught to expect that our ſincere endeavours to conquer the difficulties we have to ſurmount in our journey through life will be aided by the divine aſſiſtance; and we are encouraged to hope that by our ſtrenuous and unabated exertions, we may make a much nearer approach to that perfection of character, which reaches "the fulneſs of the meaſure of the ſtature of Chriſt," than it is poſſible for thoſe to do, who act not upon Chriſtian principles[q].

Conſider

[q] "The end of learning is to repair the ruins of our firſt parents, by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the neareſt, by poſſeſſing our ſouls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the higheſt *perfection*." Milton.

"And is it then poſſible that mortal man ſhould in any ſenſe attain unto *perfection*? Is it poſſible, that we who are born in ſin, and conceived in iniquity, who are brought

forth

Consider Christianity not by comparison only with other systems, but as a rule of life. Were the actions of mankind to be regulated by its laws, nothing would be wanting to render them happy. Peace and harmony would flourish in every part of the globe. There would be no injustice, no impiety, no fraud, no rapine, no reign of disorderly

forth in ignorance, and grow up in a multiplicity of errors; whose understandings are dark, our wills biassed, our passions strong, our affections corrupted, our appetites inordinate, our inclinations irregular? Is it possible, that we who are surrounded with things themselves obscure, with examples evil, with temptations numberless, as the variety of objects that encompass us? Is it possible, that we should make any progress towards arriving at perfection? With men indeed this must needs be impossible; but with God all things are possible. For when we consider on the other side, that we have a perfect rule, and an unerring instructor; an example complete as the divine life, and yet with all the condescensions of human infirmity; motives strong and powerful as the rewards of heaven, and pressing as the necessity of avoiding endless destruction; assistances mighty as the grace of God, and effectual as the continual guidance of the Spirit of truth: when we consider this, I say, we may then perhaps be as apt to wonder on the other hand, that all men are not perfect. And yet with all these advantages, the perfection, that the best men ever arrive to, is but in a figurative and very imperfect sense, with great allowances, and much diminution, with frequent defects, and many, very many limitations." Clarke, Sermon cxliv. vol. ii. p. 183. fol. edit.

 passions.

paſſions. Every one, contented with his lot, reſigned to the divine will, and enjoying a full proſpect of endleſs happineſs, would paſs his days in content and tranquillity, to which neither pain nor ſorrow, nor even the fear of death, could ever give any long interruption. Man would renovate his primeval condition, and in his words and actions exhibit the purity of Paradiſe. That ſuch a ſtate, as far as the imperfection of human nature would allow, can exiſt, we truſt that the lives of many Chriſtians, not only of the primitive but of ſubſequent times, can atteſt. Surely ſuch a ſyſtem muſt be tranſcendent in excellence, and bears within itſelf the marks of a divine origin[r]!

[r] "From the New Teſtament may be collected a ſyſtem of Ethics, in which every moral precept founded on reaſon is carried to a higher degree of purity and perfection, than in any other of the wiſeſt philoſophers of preceding ages; every moral precept founded on falſe principles is totally omitted, and many new precepts added peculiarly correſponding with the new object of this religion." Soame Jenyns, p. 9.

"In morality there are books enough writ both by ancient and modern philoſophers; but the morality of the Goſpel doth ſo exceed them all, that to give a man a full knowledge of true morality, I ſhall ſend him to no other book, but the New Teſtament." Locke on Reading and Study, vol. ii. p. 407.

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The revealed will of God is the proper ſource of moral obligation. It gives life and vigour to the performance of every duty, and without it all ſyſtems of morals are dry, uninteresting, and founded upon no fixed principle of action. How jejune and tedious are the Ethics of Ariſtotle, and the Offices of Cicero, the writings of Puffendorf and Grotius, of Whitby and Hutchinſon, when compared with the ſhort rules, illuſtrated by the moſt pleaſing ſimilies, and animated by the moſt ſtriking examples, with which the Goſpel of Chriſt abounds! His divine leſſons touch the heart by the affecting combination of practice with theory, and even engage the paſſions on the ſide of virtue.

" Many writers upon the ſubject of moral philoſophy divide too much the law of nature from the precepts of Revelation; which appears to me much the ſame defect, as if a commentator on the laws of England ſhould content himſelf with ſtating upon each head the common law of the land, without taking any notice of acts of Parliament; or ſhould chooſe to give his readers the common law in one book, and the ſtatute law in another. When the obligations of morality are taught, (ſays Dr. Johnſon in the Preface to the Preceptor)

ceptor) let the ſanctions of Chriſtianity never be forgotten; by which it will be ſhewn that they give ſtrength and luſtre to each other; religion will appear to be the voice of reaſon, and morality the will of God[s]."

From this view of the ſubject appears the excellence of the morality of the Goſpel, and conſequently how unneceſſary it is to reſort to any other ſcheme of Ethics for a rule of action. The various plans of duty, which have been formed excluſive of Chriſtianity, ſeem not to propoſe any motives ſufficiently cogent and permanent, to withhold men from the gratification of vicious deſires, and the indulgence of violent paſſions. They muſt therefore give place to a more perfect law, which has the beſt claims to general reception, becauſe it is founded on the expreſs Revelation of the Will of the Creator, and Governor of the world, to his dependent and accountable creatures.

VI. *The rapid and extenſive propagation of the Goſpel at its firſt preaching.*

Of all the proofs, which are adduced to

[s] Paley's Preface to his Moral and Political Philoſophy.

eſtabliſh

eſtabliſh the truth of Chriſtianity, there is no one more ſplendid, than that which ariſes from the rapid and extenſive propagation of the Goſpel. Far from being intimidated by the oppoſition, the enmity, or even the moſt ſevere and bloody perſecutions of a hoſtile world, the Apoſtles readily obeyed the commands of their Divine Maſter, and declined no hardſhips, and avoided no danger, in order to make proſelytes to the faith. The effect of their labours was in a very ſhort time viſible in every country, to which they directed their ſteps. The rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, the poliſhed natives of Italy and Greece, as well as the rude inhabitants of the moſt uncivilized countries, enliſted under the banner of the Croſs. The moſt ancient and moſt popular eſtabliſhments of religion, which had ever been known in the world, gradually gave way to the new faith. The Greek, the Roman, and the Barbarian forſook their temples, conſecrated by the veneration of ages to idolatrous worſhip, and repaired in crowds to the Chriſtian churches; and at the cloſe of only three centuries from its origin, the faith of the lowly Jeſus of Nazareth was embraced by Conſtantine, the Sovereign of the Roman world, and through-

throughout the wide compaſs of his dominions it was raiſed to the honours of a triumphant church, and to all the privileges and ſecurity of an eſtabliſhed religion.

For an undeniable proof of theſe facts, we may appeal not only to the animated repreſentations of the Fathers of the church, who expreſſed themſelves in terms of great exultation, at the proſpect of this wide diffuſion of the faith; but to a number of Pagan writers, who were ſtrongly prejudiced againſt the Chriſtian cauſe, and averſe to its advancement. The warm declamations of Juſtin Martyr and Tertullian, the energetic narratives of Euſebius, and the compariſon drawn by Chryſoſtom between the Pagans and the Chriſtians, all of them eminent writers in the primitive church, derive very conſiderable ſupport from the expreſs declarations of Suetonius, Tacitus, Pliny, Lucian, and Porphyry, all of whom were Pagans, and lived within three centuries from the time of Chriſt.

If the circumſtances of diſcouragement and danger, under which the faith of Chriſt made ſo extraordinary a progreſs, be more diſtinctly enumerated, we ſhall more properly eſtimate

the value of the argument drawn from the rapid propagation of Chriſtianity, when it was firſt proclaimed to the world[t].

Moſt of the Apoſtles were not only perſons of low education, ignoble birth, and deſtitute of every diſtinction to recommend them to the notice and favour of the world; but were expoſed to the ſlander and malice of their countrymen, for their attachment to Chriſt, and held in deteſtation by the natives of other places, by reaſon of their Jewiſh extraction and manners. They went forth to diſcharge their duty, as the miſſionaries of their divine Maſter, at a time when the world was enlightened by learning and ſcience; when philoſophy was cultivated in the ſchools of Greece, and general knowledge was diffuſed over all thoſe parts of the Roman empire, which were the principal ſcenes

[t] Paley's Evidences, vol. i. p. 30. vol. iii. p. 94. For a conciſe and accurate account of the progreſs of Chriſtianity, and the labours of its firſt preachers, ſee Paley, vol. i. c. 4, 5. He inſtitutes a compariſon between the firſt preachers of Chriſtianity and the modern miſſionaries: from the ſlow and inconſiderable progreſs made by the latter, in compariſon with the rapid and extenſive ſucceſs of the former, he proves the divine origin of the religion. This argument is fully ſtated, and urged with peculiar ſtrength and perſpicuity, vol. iii. p. 50. ſect. 2.

of

of their labours, ſufferings, and triumphs. The wiles of impoſture, and the artifices of falſehood, could not long have eſcaped the detection of ſuch inquiſitive, intelligent, and enlightened people, as flouriſhed in that age. The Apoſtles and their converts were expoſed to the taunts of deriſion, and the cruelties of perſecution; and they riſked the loſs not only of liberty and character, of friends and relations, but even of life itſelf, for the profeſſion of their new faith. Prieſts, Magiſtrates, and Kings were leagued againſt them, as they were falſely repreſented to be the abettors of dangerous innovations, and the diſturbers of public order and tranquillity. They proclaimed a ſyſtem adverſe no leſs to the eſtabliſhed religion, than to the deareſt hopes of the Jews, as they expected a triumphant Meſſiah from heaven, to deliver them from temporal diſtreſs, and reſtore the glory of their fallen kingdom. They looked with contempt on the diſciples of Chriſt, who had ſuffered the puniſhment of a common malefactor. When the Apoſtles preached the Goſpel to the Gentile world, they propoſed no union of the principles of Chriſtianity with the rites of Polytheiſm; but, on the contrary, boldly aſſerted the neceſſity of overthrowing every altar of every idol, and of

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eſtabliſhing the excluſive worſhip of the one true God. Such was the nature of their plain declarations at the particular time, when the people of every country were ſtrongly attached to their ancient and revered eſtabliſhments of religion, which charmed the eye with magnificent proceſſions and ceremonies, and gratified the paſſions with licentious feſtivals. Thus the power and authority of the great, the intereſts of the prieſts, the paſſions and prejudices of the bulk of mankind, were all engaged in open hoſtility againſt the preachers of the new religion, and ſeemed for ever likely to exclude the admiſſion of Chriſtianity. But all theſe obſtacles, irreſiſtible as they were by exertions merely human, gradually yielded to the unexceptionable teſtimony, which the firſt miſſionaries bore to the character, actions, and reſurrection of their Lord and Maſter,—to the evidence of miracles, which they were enabled to perform,—and to the power of divine truth.

CHAPTER II.

The Subject continued.

THE Chriſtian religion, even attended, as we have ſeen it was, with the moſt ſtriking proofs of its divine origin, was no ſooner proclaimed to the world, than it met with thoſe who cavilled at its doctrines, and oppoſed its progreſs. It was too pure in its nature, and too ſublime in its objects, to ſuit the groſs conceptions of ſome men; and its divine Author erected too perfect a ſtandard of duty to ſuit the depraved inclinations and unruly paſſions of others. We are therefore the leſs ſurpriſed to find, that it has from the earlieſt ages been aſſailed by enemies of every deſcription. As its followers were at firſt expoſed to the ſevereſt trials of perſecution; ſo have they, in ſucceeding ages, been obliged to defend themſelves againſt the attacks of miſapplied learning, and the cavils of ingenious ſophiſtry. Writers neither deſtitute of diligence nor acuteneſs have attempted, in various ages, to acquire reputation in this unhappy cauſe. The moſt prominent and ſtriking circumſtance which muſt be remarked

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by every candid examiner of their works, from the days of Julian the apoſtate to thoſe of Gibbon the infidel hiſtorian, is; that they have frequently incurred the ſame cenſure, which they have beſtowed with an unſparing hand upon others; for at the ſame time, that they have not ſcrupled to reprobate in the ſevereſt terms the intemperate zeal of the advocates for the faith, they have diſplayed as much, or probably more, vehemence and pertinacity, in their own cauſe.

Every mode of attack upon Chriſtianity has been tried, which the moſt fertile invention could dictate; ſometimes it has been aſſailed by open arguments, ſometimes by diſingenuous inſinuations; frequently has metaphyſical ſubtlety endeavoured to undermine it, and frequently the ſneer of ſarcaſm, and the effrontery of ridicule, have been directed againſt its ſacred inſtitutions, and its moſt ſincere and ſerious profeſſors. But much as unbelievers of every deſcription may have aſſerted their claims to ſuperiority over ignorant minds, or much as they may have imagined they ſoared above vulgar prejudices, they have never remained long unanſwered, or unrefuted. As often as infidelity has

 waged

waged war againſt the faith, and fought with various weapons, ſo often has ſhe been defeated and diſarmed by able champions of Chriſtianity.

"Whilſt the infidel mocks at the ſuperſtition of the vulgar, inſults over their credulous fear, their childiſh errors and fantaſtic rites, it does not occur to him to obſerve, that the moſt prepoſterous device, by which the weakeſt devotee ever believed he was ſecuring the happineſs of a future life, is more rational than unconcern about it. Upon this ſubject nothing is ſo abſurd as indifference, no folly ſo contemptible as thoughtleſſneſs and levity[a]."

Modern unbelievers may have reaſon to boaſt of the boldneſs of their attacks, but little of the originality of their arguments, ſince the cavils of Voltaire, of Gibbon, and of Hume, newly pointed as they may be with wit, or urged as they may be with additional vehemence, can be traced to Julian, Porphyry, and Celſus, the ancient enemies of the church. Some, who diſlike the toil of in-

[a] Paley's Moral Philoſophy, p. 391.

veſtigating truth for themſelves, eagerly take advantage of the labours of others; and lay great ſtreſs upon the example of thoſe eminent men, who have diſbelieved, or rather in ſome inſtances perhaps only affected to diſbelieve, the fundamental truths of Christianity. The Chriſtian profeſſes not to deny the force of ſuch an argument, becauſe he is aware, that the weight of authority is very powerful, whether avowed or concealed. It undoubtedly gives a bias to the mind, which is more commonly felt than acknowledged; and it has conſiderable influence in determining the judgment in moſt of the affairs of life. If however this argument be urged in oppoſition to Chriſtianity, fair reaſoning requires that it ſhould be allowed due force in its favour. Aſk the infidel, who are the leaders, under whoſe banners he has enliſted himſelf, and he will point to Hume, and to Bolingbroke: but ſurely, if even we allow the philoſophical preciſion of the one, and the florid and elegant declamation of the other, all the praiſe they deſerve, they can never bear a competition with thoſe luminaries of ſcience, and thoſe teachers of true wiſdom, who have not only embraced the Chriſtian faith, but maintained its truth and divine

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origin, and directed their conduct by its rules. They can never be weighed in the balance of merit, with the advocates of Christianity so dispassionate, sincere, ingenuous, and acute, so divested of all objections, that can be drawn from professional bias, or interested attachments, as Milton, Clarendon, Hale, Boyle, Bacon, Locke, Newton, Addison, Lyttleton, West, and Johnson[b].

Ought not the testimony, which such men as these have given, to be held in the highest estimation? A testimony founded not upon any surrender of their judgments to the prevailing opinions of the day, but upon close and patient examination of the evidences of Christianity, of which their writings give the most satisfactory proofs. Or are such men

[b] The list of those on whom no motive but a love of truth, and a regard for their own salvation, operated to induce them to embrace Christianity, may be greatly enlarged; more particularly by adverting to many characters of the first eminence, distinguished in other countries. To the illustrious names of Savile, Hales, Seldon, Hatton, Mead, Steel, Dugdale, Nelson, Littleton, as well as those included in my list, may be added those of Salmasius, Grotius, Montfaucon, Pascal, Puffendorf, Erasmus, Montesquieu, and Haller. I am sensible of the great imperfections of this detail.

to be undervalued, when brought into comparifon with the vaunting infidels of modern times? Where do we find perfons of fuch profound underftandings, and inquifitive minds, as Bacon, Locke, and Newton; where of fuch a fublime genius as Milton; where of fuch various and extenfive learning, exhaufting all the literary treafures of eaftern, as well as weftern literature, as he who at the clofe of life recorded his conviction of the truth of divine Revelation, and celebrated the excellence of the holy Scriptures? To compare the race of modern infidels in point of genius, learning, fcience, judgment, or love of truth; to compare Voltaire, Hume, Gibbon, Godwin, and Payne, with fuch men as thefe, were furely as idle, and as abfurd, as to compare the weaknefs of infancy with the maturity of manhood; the flutter of a butterfly with the vigorous foaring of an eagle; or the twinkling of a ftar with the glory of the fun, illuminating the univerfe with his meridian brightnefs.

It is well remarked by an elegant and fenfible writer, who could have no profeffional bias to influence his opinions, that, "The clergy are both ready and able to

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maintain the cause of Christianity, as their many excellent writings in defence of it sufficiently demonstrate: but as the generality of mankind is more governed by prejudice than reason, their writings are not so universally read, or so candidly received, as they deserve; because they are supposed to proceed, not from conscience and conviction, but from interested views, and the common cause of their profession—A supposition evidently as partial and injurious as that would be, which should impute the gallant behaviour of our officers to the mean consideration of their pay, and their hopes of preferment; exclusive of all the nobler motives of gentlemen, viz. the sense of honour, and the love of their country[c]."

Against the authority of such insidious writers, as Voltaire and Gibbon, we enter our serious, and we think our equitable protest; we exhort every one to beware of their sophistry, and to guard against their delusive arts. They have violated the laws of fair controversy, and fought with the weapons that cannot be allowed on such occasions. They employ ridicule instead of argument,

[c] West on the Resurrection.

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artful inſinuation inſtead of ſerious diſcuſſion, and bold aſſertion inſtead of proof. They write to the paſſions and imagination, and not to the judgment of mankind. They artfully involve the queſtions relative to the evidences of Chriſtianity in perplexity, and endeavour to throw the blame ariſing from the diſſenſions and uſurpations, the vices and ignorance of ſome of the clergy, and the incroachments, which in dark and ſuperſtitious times were made upon the liberties of mankind, upon Chriſtianity itſelf. They ſelect thoſe topics, which can beſt be turned to their purpoſe, by the arts of miſrepreſentation; they embelliſh them with the flowery ornaments of ſtile, and ſkilfully adapt them to the paſſions and prejudices of their readers. As however their conduct is thus artful and inſidious, ſo ought their labours to be vain and unfruitful; for they do not try the cauſe upon its own merits: they do not, like candid and diſpaſſionate reaſoners, ſeparate the ſubject in diſpute from all foreign and extraneous circumſtances: they do not agitate queſtions, and ſtart objections, from a deſire of being well informed: they do not, in the ſpirit of true philoſophy, examine the evidences of Chriſtianity with that becoming ſeriouſneſs, which

is due to an affair of ſuch infinite importance to the preſent welfare, and future happineſs of mankind: they do not conſider, that the ſame unbelief, if applied to the common records of hiſtory, or the ordinary affairs of life, would expoſe them to the imputation of blind raſhneſs, or extreme folly. As their conduct is evidently not dictated by a love of truth, their ſcoffs, their ſarcaſms, and their ſophiſtry, deſerve no attention; and as they not only wantonly reject, but induſtriouſly depreciate the beſt gift of heaven, they ought to be ſhunned, and reprobated, as enemies to the deareſt intereſts of mankind[d].

And they certainly ought to be ſo conſidered, whether we obſerve the baleful influence of their opinions upon our preſent, or our future ſtate. By a ſtrange perverſion of reaſon and argument, ſome of them labour to ſubvert the eternal order of nature[e]. Inſtead

[d] "I am no advocate for the abject proſtration of the devotee, or the frantic ecſtaſies of the fanatic. But there is a ſuperſtition, ſays the immortal Bacon, in ſhunning ſuperſtition; and he that diſdains to follow religion in the open and the trodden path, may chance to loſe his way in the trackleſs wilds of experiment, or in the obſcure labyrinths of ſpeculation." Parr on Education, p. 24.

[e] For this train of obſervation I am indebted to "Modern

ſtead of repreſenting the exerciſe of the private affections, as preparatory to that of public virtue, they ſet the one in direct oppoſition to the other. They propoſe to build univerſal philanthropy upon the ruins of individual benevolence, and tell us we muſt love our whole ſpecies more, at the ſame time they direct us to love every individual of it leſs. In purſuit of this chimerical project, which, to the ſhame and diſgrace of this country, has found advocates in England, as well as in France, gratitude, humility, conjugal, parental, and filial affection, together with all the lovely train of domeſtic virtues, are ridiculed and degraded, as too low and vulgar for the attention of enlightened philoſophers; virtue is confined ſolely to a certain vague and enthuſiaſtic ardour for the general good, and the affections for the ſocial circle in which we live are violently transferred to diſtant countries and unknown multitudes. But ſurely it is natural to inquire, when all the common charities are thus deadened and

dern Infidelity conſidered," in a Sermon preached at the Baptiſt Meeting at Cambridge, by R. Hall, A. M. Conſidering the ſound arguments of this writer, recommended by great eloquence and zeal in the cauſe of Chriſtianity, I am inclined to exclaim, "talis cum ſit, utinam *noſter* eſſet." See p. 57, &c.

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deſtroyed, when the flame that communicates its genial warmth and brightneſs to ſocial life is extinguiſhed, and all the ties that now bind man to man are torn aſunder by the hand of the modern Philoſophiſts—ſurely it is natural to inquire, from whence is this ardent affection for the general good to ſpring? And when they have completed their work of inſenſibility, or rather of infatuation; when they have taught their diſciple to look with perfect indifference upon his neareſt connexions; when he has eſtranged himſelf from his friends, inſulted his benefactors, and ſilenced the voice of gratitude, pity, and charity, will he be better prepared for the love of his ſpecies? Will he become a true philanthropiſt, in proportion as he labours to ſuppreſs the feelings, and neglects the duties of a parent and a friend? Rather may we not conclude with certainty, that in this attempt to revive a ſpecies of Stoiciſm, and to baniſh all the feelings which ſoften, humanize, and refine our hearts, that ſelfiſhneſs, moroſeneſs, and cold and ſullen apathy will aſſume the empire of the ſoul, and ſink the human character to the loweſt ſtate of degradation and wretchedneſs? Rather may we not be certain, that under pretence of advancing the general and univerſal good—

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terms that are ſo indefinite as to be almoſt unintelligible, when applied to creatures of limited capacities like man, endued with limited powers, and moving in narrow ſpheres of action—terms belonging to an object to which imagination may give innumerable ſhapes—rather may we not be certain that he will be prepared for the breach of every duty, and the perpetration of every crime?

But if thoſe who indulge in theſe wild ſpeculations, and thus ſport with humanity as well as reaſon, were to examine the holy Scriptures, they would perceive that Revelation is in perfect harmony with the order of nature, which inſtructs us by our own feelings, that univerſal benevolence is the laſt and moſt perfect fruit of the ſocial affections. Such is the voice of nature, and ſuch is the principle of ancient philoſophy refined, enlarged, and perfected by Chriſtianity. The ſolid arguments of the great Roman Orator, when reaſoning upon this ſubject, in which he compriſes the wiſdom of all former ages, coincide with the precepts of holy Writ. Thus do Reaſon and Revelation unite to confirm the order of Nature, which leads in all things from particulars to generals, from private to public affections, from the love of parents,

parents, brothers, and ſiſters, to thoſe more extenſive relations, which, beginning with our native place, extend to our country, and from thence proceeding, comprehend the vaſt ſociety of the human race. An attempt to reverſe this order is as abſurd as to build without a foundation, to expect a copious and perennial ſtream after the ſource of a river has been exhauſted, or to think to attain the height of ſcience, without acquiring the firſt elements of knowledge.

From whatever cauſes the doubts and cavils of modern Infidels ariſe, whether from a deſire to gain the reputation of ſuperior ſagacity, a love of novelty, an ambition to ſoar above vulgar notions, a fear of being thought credulous or ſuperſtitious, or the purſuit of ſuch practices as are inconſiſtent with the purity of the Chriſtian character; it is clear, they are imperfectly acquainted with the real nature of the religion itſelf, and the various proofs by which it is ſupported. They condemn not ſo much what they do not underſtand, as what they do not inveſtigate. A due attention to ancient hiſtory might have a happy effect in removing many of their doubts, and preparing the way for their converſion. Let them inquire into the ignorance and depravity

vity of the world, before the coming of Chriſt; the ſuperſtition and the cruelty of Pagan worſhip, and the inſufficiency of philoſophy, as a guide to moral excellence: let them conſider, whether it was not highly probable, that under ſuch circumſtances an all-wiſe and an all-merciful Being would impart his will to mankind: let them aſk themſelves ſeriouſly, whether it is reaſonable to conclude, that, after ages of ignorance of his true character, this all-wiſe and all-merciful Being would at length fix upon falſehood, and that alone, as they pretend Chriſtianity to be, for the [f] effectual method of making himſelf known to his creatures; and that what the honeſt and ardent exerciſe of reaſon by the wiſeſt men, ſuch as Socrates, Plato, and Cicero, was not permitted to accompliſh, he ſhould allow to be effected by fraud, deluſion, and impoſture. Let them proceed to weigh the leading facts attending the riſe of Chriſtianity; facts that reſt entirely upon independent proofs to eſtabliſh their truth; ſuch as the humble birth of our Lord, the ſublime nature of his Goſpel, abſolutely irreconcileable with the prejudices of his countrymen, and extremely unpalatable to the Gentiles; and more particu-

[f] Hall's Sermon, p. 84.

larly the total want of all human aid to enſure its reception, and promote its ſucceſs: were they to apply their minds ſeriouſly to the ſubject, would they not, we may confidently aſk, find theſe, and many other arguments tending to the ſame point? And might not their curioſity then lead them to extend their reſearches into all its direct and poſitive evidences [g]?

Among other inſtances that might be mentioned, the conduct of the author of "the Free Inquiry into the Origin of Evil" gives us full authority to anſwer theſe queſtions in the

[g] "The probability that the Goſpel may be true, is inferred from the utter improbability that it ſhould be falſe. It is like nothing of human contrivance. The perfection of its morality tranſcends the beſt efforts of human wiſdom: the character of its Founder is far ſuperior to that of a mere man: and it will not be ſaid, that his Apoſtles can be compared to any other fiſhermen, or any other teachers, that ever were heard of. The views diſplayed in the Goſpel of the Divine diſpenſations, with reſpect to the human race, are ſuch as before the commencement of our Saviour's miniſtry had never entered into the mind of man. To believe all this to be a mere human fable requires a degree of credulity, which, in the ordinary affairs of life, would do a man little credit; it is like believing, that a firſt rate ſhip of war might have been the work and the invention of a child." Beattie's Evidences of the Chriſtian Religion, v. i. p. 86.

the affirmative. He has ſtated with great candour the progreſs of his conviction of the truth of Chriſtianity; and makes his acknowledgments in its favour in a manner, which ſhews the ſtrength and the tendency of its evidences, when examined with care and attention.

"Having ſome leiſure, and more curioſity, I employed them both in reſolving a queſtion, which ſeemed to me of ſome importance—whether Chriſtianity was really an impoſture, or whether it is what it pretends to be, a revelation communicated to mankind by the interpoſition of ſupernatural power? On a candid inquiry, I ſoon found that the firſt was an abſolute impoſſibility; and that its pretenſions to the latter were founded on the moſt ſolid grounds. In the further purſuit of my examination, I perceived at every ſtep new lights ariſing, and ſome of the brighteſt from parts of it the moſt obſcure, but productive of the cleareſt proofs, becauſe equally beyond the power of human artifice to invent, and human reaſon to diſcover. Theſe arguments, which have convinced me of the divine origin of this Religion, I have put together in as clear and conciſe a manner as I was able, thinking they might have the

the ſame effect upon others; and being of opinion, that if there were a few more true Chriſtians in the world, it would be beneficial to themſelves, and by no means detrimental to the public [h]."

The excellence of Chriſtianity appears in nothing more than that in proportion to the care with which its ſacred oracles are examined, the more ſtrongly does the light of its truth ſhine upon the mind. The progreſs of Infidelity, and the apoſtaſy of multitudes, may awaken our concern, and make us more than uſually ſolicitous to caution the riſing generation againſt the errors of thoſe, who wiſh to miſlead them. But is there any circumſtance in theſe awful "ſigns of the times," that ſhould ſhake our faith, or excite our ſurpriſe, as if the preſent criſis was peculiarly alarming and unexpected? The attentive reader of the holy Scriptures may ſafely reply in the negative; ſince the actual condition of the world is preciſely ſuch as revelation gives us reaſon to expect. All the circumſtances that mark the character and the conduct of Infidels; their turn for ridicule, their folly, and impa-

[h] Soame Jenyns's View of the internal Evidence of the Chriſtian Religion, p. 190.

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tience of reſtraint; their licentiouſneſs of conduct, and inſatiable appetite for change; the ſnares they lay to catch the unwary; and their vain profeſſions to free the world from ſlavery, whilſt they are themſelves the captives of ſin, are drawn by the pencil of Prophecy with ſuch clearneſs and accuracy, that no one can miſtake the reſemblance.

In the Epiſtles of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Jude, you may read an exact anticipation of that modern Philoſophiſm, which was ordained to agitate and afflict the world, in theſe "latter" or "laſt times." And thus, by examining the Prophetic Word of God, and comparing it with the preſent ſtate of the world, you increaſe the Evidences of Chriſtianity. The Free-thinkers of England, the Philoſophiſts of France, and the Illuminati of Germany, the diſciples of Bolingbroke, Voltaire, Weiſhaupt, and Godwin, confirm the divine origin of the Scriptures, which they reject, and accompliſh in a moſt exact and wonderful manner, the predictions which are the ſubjects of their contempt and ridicule.

The Benefits resulting from Christianity.

Let the sincere inquirer after truth turn with aversion from such delusive guides, as the Infidel writers either of ancient or modern times, and consider what are the benefits, which the prevalence of Christianity has actually conferred upon the world; and let him carefully estimate what permanent and substantial good, by the influence of its precepts, and the fulfilment of its promises, it is able at all times to produce.

Christianity has triumphed over those practices, customs, and institutions, which in ancient times were a disgrace to the character of man. It has softened the horrors of war, and alleviated the treatment of prisoners. It has vindicated the rights of nature, by abolishing the cruel practice of exposing infants; and it has raised the character and the importance of women in society, and given greater dignity, permanency, and honour to the institution of marriage. It put a stop to the combats of gladiators, the favourite and barbarous amusement of the Romans; it banished the impure conduct that disgraced the worship of the Pagan Deities, as well as totally

tally extinguiſhed the worſhip itſelf. It has abridged the labours of the maſs of mankind, and procured for them one happy day in ſeven for the enjoyment of repoſe, and attention to the exerciſes of public devotion. All Chriſtian countries, and more eſpecially our own, abound with eſtabliſhments for the relief of ſickneſs and poverty, and the maintenance of helpleſs infancy and decrepid age. It has triumphed over the ſlavery, that prevailed in every part of the Roman Empire, and purſues its glorious progreſs, in the diminution of a ſimilar ſtate of miſery and oppreſſion, which has long diſgraced the European character in the Weſt Indies.

Thus has it in its general and combined effects exalted the character of man, by engrafting the pureſt affections and the moſt ſacred duties upon the ſtock of his natural deſires, and moſt powerful inſtincts. It has provided the means of eſtabliſhing a perfect harmony between the ſenſibilities of his nature, and the convictions of his reaſon, by the Revelation of its divine truths.

And, not to expatiate upon its mild and ſalutary effects upon the temper, the paſſions, and the general conduct of millions, who, although

though their names were never recorded in the page of hiſtory, were more worthy and honourable members of ſociety, and are infinitely more deſerving the approbation of mankind, than all the ancient heroes who have ſought renown by war, or all the modern ſceptics who have aſpired to fame by their oppoſition to the faith; we may enumerate, in addition to its extenſive and various improvements, the refinement it has given to manners, and its beneficial influence upon the public judgment of morals. Mankind, no longer left a prey to ignorance, or to looſe and fluctuating opinions, are furniſhed with a guide, to which they can always reſort, for principles of religion and rules of conduct. Hence the moſt illiterate and humble members of the Chriſtian Church can form more true and accurate notions of the Deity, his attributes and providence, as well as a more rational notion of moral obligation, of virtue, and vice, and the final deſtination of man, than was ever reached by the ancient ſages in the brighteſt days of Heathen Philoſophy.

Chriſtianity, far from being calculated for any political conſtitution in particular, is found to proſper and flouriſh under every form of government; as it is equally incom-

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patible with licentiousness on the one hand, or oppression on the other. It corrects the spirit of democracy, and softens the rigour of despotic power. An enlargement of mind, and superior intelligence, distinguish in a peculiar manner those nations that have embraced the faith, from those extensive portions of mankind, who fight under the banners of Mahomet, or adhere to the more pacific Institutes of Brama and Confucius. The inhabitants of the East groan under the oppressions of arbitrary power, and little does their religion contribute to alleviate the weight of their chains. The Mahometans more especially are marked by peculiar ignorance; and so far are they from being distinguished by the light of science, or the cultivation of useful knowledge, that they adopt with the greatest reluctance all foreign improvements, and even smother in its birth the spirit of liberal inquiry and research [a].

To Christian nations belong the exclusive cultivation of learning and science, and the most assiduous advancement of every useful and ornamental art. By them every faculty of the soul is called forth into action; no torpid indolence stops the bold career of their

[a] White's Bampton Lect. Serm. ix.

genius, or reſtrains the patient and effectual operations of their induſtry. Since the purity of religion was reſtored by the Reformation, every part of Chriſtendom has caught the flame of emulation; general knowledge is widely diffuſed, and the character of a Chriſtian, and more particularly that of a Proteſtant, is marked by a ſuperior improvement of the intellectual powers.

The Church of England.

Our Church, which ſtands at the head of the Proteſtant Eſtabliſhments, was, by the favour of divine Providence, purified from the corruptions of the See of Rome in the reign of Henry VIII. Her courageous and enlightened Reformers threw off the yoke of Papal ſupremacy and ſuperſtition, revived the lively image of the primitive Eſtabliſhment, and reſtored the modes of worſhip, that had prevailed in the pureſt times of Chriſtianity. This conformity has been celebrated by its own members at home, and its admirers abroad, as its moſt illuſtrious and diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic. The fundamental Articles of her Faith are ſtrictly conſiſtent with Scripture; her ſacred edifices, diveſted of the gaudy decorations of Popiſh temples, are furniſhed only with thoſe appendages which give dignity

nity to public worſhip. Her devotional exerciſes, not confined to a foreign tongue, but intelligible to all, may be fairly pronounced ſuperior to all other ſacred compoſitions of human origin, for ſimplicity of language, fervour of piety, and evangelical tenour of ſentiment. The orders of the Prieſthood, deriving their origin from the Apoſtles themſelves, are confirmed by the earlieſt uſage, and are recommended by the great utility of clerical ſubordination. The Conſtitution of the State, in return for the alliance which it has formed with the Church, derives from the aſſociation additional ſecurity for the obſervance of the laws, and the preſervation of order. The unmoleſted profeſſion, and open exerciſe of their own particular worſhip, are allowed to Diſſenters of all denominations. The prudent toleration, with which they are indulged, equally avoids the extremes of perſecution, which cuts aſunder the ties of charity, and of that unbounded freedom, which may convert religion into an engine of political miſchief. Thus deſervedly renowned for her inſtitutions, and her modes of worſhip, the Church of England is as favourable to the cultivation of the mind, as to the advancement of pure Chriſtianity; and the zeal of her ſons for the promotion of her intereſts has

has never been more confpicuous, than their learning, their talents, and their virtues.

To the prevalence of Chriftianity, the ftudy of its records, and the inftitutions and eftablifhments to which it gave rife, modern times are indebted for the prefervation of the invaluable remains of Grecian and Roman literature. When the barbarians of the North, and the Eaft, and the Mahometans of the South overfpread the provinces of the Roman Empire, the city of Conftantinople, where we may recollect the Chriftian Religion had been firft fupported by Imperial authority, preferved its inhabitants from that general ignorance which overfpread the reft of the world. During the dark ages, the light of learning, however feeble, was ftill kept burning in monaftic cells; the Latin language, into which the Scriptures were tranflated, was cultivated; and the precious remains of claffical genius efcaped the ravages, to which every other fpecies of property was expofed by the ferocity and violence of a barbarous people. From thefe repofitories, happily fecured from deftruction by the fuperftition of the times, they were drawn at the revival of learning; and the fervice which they have afforded to the human mind has not been confined

fined to its reſearches into philoſophy, ſcience, and literature, but extended to ſacred criticiſm, and the illuſtration of the Scriptures.

As Chriſtianity is thus auſpicious to the cultivation of the intellectual powers, as well as beneficial in its moral effects, it deſerves the firſt attention of the ſtudious. The duties which it preſcribes indeed are admirably calculated to produce that docile temper and ſoberneſs of thought, thoſe habits of perſeverance and patient inveſtigation, which are abſolutely neceſſary in the purſuit of general knowledge. Religion ſtamps its juſt value upon all other attainments, and conſecrates them to the beſt and moſt noble ſervice. It aſſerts its own glorious and tranſcendent ſuperiority, becauſe it confines not its reſearches to objects of immediate utility only, but elevates our thoughts to heaven, and carries on the mind to the growing improvement of its faculties, throughout the infinite ages of eternity.

Such are the reaſons for our urgent importunities to our young readers, to lay the foundations of their lives on the firm ground of Chriſtian faith, and build upon it whatever is juſt and good, worthy and noble, till

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the ſtructure be complete in moral beauty. "The world, into which you are entering, lies in wait with a variety of temptations. Unfavourable ſentiments of religion will ſoon be ſuggeſted to you, and all the ſnares of luxury, falſe honour, and intereſt, ſpread in your way, which are too ſucceſsful, and to many fatal. Happy the few that in any part of life become ſenſible of their errors, and with painful reſolution tread back the wrong ſteps, which they have taken! But happieſt of men is he, who by an even courſe of right conduct from the firſt, as far as human frailty permits, hath at once avoided the miſeries of ſin, the ſorrows of repentance, and the difficulties of virtue; who not only can think of his preſent ſtate with compoſure, but reflects on his paſt behaviour with thankful approbation; and looks forward with unmixed joy to that important future hour, when he ſhall appear before God, and humbly offer to him a whole life ſpent in his ſervice [i]."

Let me then moſt ſeriouſly exhort you, my young readers, to liſten with all earneſtneſs to the ſacred words of the great Founder of our holy Religion. Attend with mingled

[i] Archbiſhop Secker's Sermons.

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ſenſations of delight, gratitude, and reverence, to the revelation of the Divine will, which he deſcended from heaven to promulgate. The duties, which you owe to your Maker, to mankind, and to yourſelves, are ſtated with full authority, and explained with the utmoſt perſpicuity, in the inſpired Writings of his Evangeliſts and Apoſtles. In them you find that the Saviour of the world has illuſtrated his divine precepts by the moſt pleaſing and ſtriking examples, has enforced them by the moſt awful ſanctions, and recommended them by the bright perfection of his own conduct. There he has unfolded the wonderful myſtery of redemption, and communicated the means, by which degenerate and fallen man may recover the favour of his offended Maker. There he gives a clear view of the divine adminiſtration of all human affairs; and there he repreſents this mortal life, which forms only a part of our exiſtence, as a ſhort period of our warfare and trial. He points to the ſolemn ſcenes, which open beyond the grave; the reſurrection of the dead, the laſt judgment, and the impartial diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments. He diſplays the completion of the divine mercy and goodneſs in the final eſtabliſhment of perfection and happineſs. By

making

making ſuch wonderful and intereſting diſcoveries, let him excite your zeal, and fix your determination to adorn the acquirements of learning and ſcience with the graces of his holy Religion, and to dedicate the days of health and of youth to his honour and ſervice. Amid the retirement of ſtudy, or the buſineſs of active life, let it be your firſt care, as it is your duty, and your intereſt, to recollect, that the great Author and Finiſher of your faith has placed the rewards of virtue beyond the reach of time and death; and promiſed that eternal happineſs to the faith and obedience of man, which can alone fill his capacity for enjoyment, and alone ſatisfy the ardent deſires of his ſoul.

CLASS

CLASS THE SECOND.

LANGUAGE.

CHAPTER I.

Language in general.

THE principles and characteristics of Language render it a subject of pleasing and useful inquiry. It is the general vehicle of our ideas, and represents by words all the conceptions of the mind. Books and conversation are the offspring of this prolific parent. The former introduce us to the treasures of learning and science, and make us acquainted with the opinions, discoveries, and transactions of past ages; by the latter, the general intercourse of society is carried on, and our ideas are conveyed to each other with the same rapidity, with which they arise in the mind. Language, in conjunction with reason, to which it gives its proper activity, use, and ornament, raises man above the lower orders of animals; and, in proportion as it

it is poliſhed and refined, exalts one nation above another in the ſcale of civilization and intellectual dignity.

Inquiries into the nature of any particular Language, if not too abſtruſe and metaphyſical, are ſubjects of pleaſing and uſeful ſpeculation. So cloſe is the connection between words and ideas, that no learning whatever can be obtained without their aid and interpoſition. In proportion as the former are ſtudied and examined, the latter become clear and complete; and according as words convey our meaning in a full and adequate manner, we avoid the inconvenience of being miſunderſtood, and are ſecure from the perplexity of doubt, the errors of miſconception, and the cavils of diſpute. It muſt always be remembered, that words are merely the arbitrary ſigns of ideas, connected with them by cuſtom, not allied to them by nature; and that each idea, like a ray of light, is liable to be tinged by the medium of the word through which it paſſes. The volumes of controverſy which fill the libraries of the learned would have been comparatively very ſmall, if the diſputants who wrote them had given a clear definition of their principal terms. Accurate definition is one of the moſt uſeful parts of logic;

logic; and we ſhall find, when we come to the examination of that ſubject, that it is the only ſolid ground upon which reaſon can build her arguments, and proceed to juſt concluſions.

In order that the true ſenſe of words may be aſcertained, and that they may ſtrike with their whole force, derivation muſt lend its aid to definition. It is this which points out the ſource from whence a word ſprings, and the various ſtreams of ſignification that flow from it. The ſtudent, while employed in tracing the origin of Language, and aſcertaining its ſignification, will reap great advantage from calling hiſtory to his aſſiſtance; and he will find that alluſions, idioms, and figures of ſpeech are illuſtrated by particular facts, opinions, and inſtitutions. The cuſtoms of the Greeks throw light upon the expreſſions of their authors; without ſome acquaintance with the Roman laws, many forms of expreſſion in the Orations of Cicero are unintelligible; and many deſcriptions in the Old and New Teſtament are obſcure, unleſs they are illuſtrated by a knowledge of eaſtern manners. Furniſhed with ſuch aids, the ſcholar acquires complete not partial information, throws upon Language all the light that

that can be reflected from his general ſtudies; and imbibes, as far as a modern can imbibe it, the true and original ſpirit of ancient authors.

As long as any one confines his ſtudies to his native tongue, he cannot underſtand it perfectly, or aſcertain with accuracy its poverty or richneſs, its beauties or defects. He who cultivates other languages as well as his own, gains new inſtruments to increaſe the ſtock of his ideas, and opens new roads to the temple of knowledge. He draws his learning from pure ſources, converſes with the natives of other countries without the aſſiſtance of an interpreter, and ſurveys the contents of books without the dim and unſteady light of tranſlations. He may unite the ſpeculations of a philoſopher with the acquirements of a linguiſt; he may compare different tongues, and form juſt concluſions with reſpect to their defects and beauties, and their correſpondence with the temper, genius, and manners of a people. He may trace the progreſs of national refinement, and diſcover, by a compariſon of arts and improvements with their correſpondent terms, that the hiſtory of Language, inaſmuch as it developes the efforts of human genius, and the

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riſe and advancement of its inventions, conſtitutes an important part of the hiſtory of man.

Theories of the Origin of Language.

Various theories have been formed to account for the origin of language, which, however ingenious, are far from being ſatisfactory. The celebrated author of the Wealth of Nations ſuppoſes "two ſavages, who had never been taught to ſpeak, and who had been bred up remote from the ſocieties of men, would naturally begin to form that language, by which they would endeavour to make their ſentiments intelligible to each other, by uttering certain ſounds, whenever they meant to denote objects." Thus they would begin to give names to things, to claſs individual objects under a ſpecies, which they denoted by a common name, and proceed gradually to the formation of all the parts of ſpeech [a].

The condition of theſe two ſavages is wholly imaginary, as it cannot apply to any perſons, who have ever been known to exiſt.—It may

[a] Conſiderations concerning the firſt formation of languages, in Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments, vol. ii. p. 403.

ſairly be aſked, how they came into ſuch a ſtate? Was it in conſequence of their own previous determination? If it was, then they muſt have converſed, in order to make ſuch an agreement. If it was not the reſult of ſuch a meaſure, they muſt have been placed there by other rational and talkative beings, and muſt conſequently have acquired from them the names, which in their recluſe condition they applied to the ſurrounding objects. If they borrowed the terms from others, then of courſe the hypotheſis of a language, conſidered as an invention of the ſavages themſelves, falls at once to the ground.

Some inſtances, it may be granted, have been reported of perſons, who have been found in a wild ſtate, without education or the uſe of ſpeech: but no accurate and well-authenticated account is given of the exact time of life, when they were firſt placed in ſuch a ſtate, or of their manner of living. Upon ſuch weak principles therefore no argument can be eſtabliſhed to confirm the truth of the hypotheſis.

The theory of Lord Monboddo, embelliſhed as it is by quotations from ancient authors, and ſupported by plauſible arguments, is liable

ble to ſimilar objections[b]. He ſuppoſes, that language was not originally natural to man, and that the political ſtate of ſociety was neceſſary for its invention. This principle forms the baſis of his elaborate work on the origin and progreſs of language. He aſſerts that man in his natural ſtate is a wild animal, without language or arts of any kind. To prove this point, he cites the opinions of Lucretius and Horace, who deſcribe the human race as firſt riſing from the earth, mute and ſavage, and living for ſome time in a ſtate of war, before the invention of arts and the eſtabliſhment of laws introduced the improvement of manners. He quotes deſcriptions from the works of Diodorus Siculus, Leo Africanus, and other writers. But in the whole detail of his authorities, there is not one ſtrong and well atteſted fact, that is ſtrictly and indiſputably to his purpoſe. The vague and fanciful deſcriptions of poets cannot be admitted as proper evidence in ſuch a caſe. The accounts of Diodorus Siculus, and the other writers whom he preſſes into his ſervice, are taken from the reports of credulous travellers. Some of them are not

[b] Origin of Language, vol. i. p. 514. 545. 626. vol. iv. p. 50.

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to the purpoſe; in many of the others are circumſtances highly improbable, or evidently falſe. Some of the deſcriptions are not ſufficiently accurate to enable us to aſcertain, whether the beings, that were obſerved by travellers to live in a wild ſtate, were really men, or inferior animals. Lord Monboddo is aware that the arguments of Rouſſeau, founded upon the principle that there could be no ſociety without language, preſs with great force againſt his whole ſyſtem. To what inſtances then has he recourſe to extricate himſelf from the difficulty? Not to an example taken from a race of men poſſeſſing the faculty of reaſon, and the organs of ſpeech; but from the beavers of Canada, and the foxes of the river Danaſtris! When he ought to adduce inſtances of men, he produces thoſe of inferior animals; and his deſcriptions of them are ſo extraordinary, that they are entitled to very little credit. When he ſpeaks of ſociety, he certainly muſt be underſtood to mean only the ſtate of ſuch creatures, as, deſtitute of the powers of colloquial intercourſe, herd together merely as they are impelled by the force of inſtinct. Such a ſtate is more properly to be called gregarious, than ſociable; becauſe to the latter term is always applied ſome idea of a diſpoſition to

converſe,

converſe, and to communicate thought, which is totally inconſiſtent with the nature of any beings not endowed with the faculty of ſpeech.

How the original ſocieties of men could have been formed without the aid of language, or language invented without ſociety, are points which the diſquiſitions of theſe writers, however ingenious, are far from enabling us to ſettle. The only rational and ſatisfactory method of ſolving the difficulty is to refer the origin of ſpeech to the great Creator himſelf. Not that it is neceſſary to ſuppoſe, that he inſpired the firſt parents of mankind with any particular original or primitive language; but that he made them fully ſenſible of the power with which they were endued of forming articulate ſounds, gave them an impulſe to exert it, and left the arbitrary impoſition of words to their own choice. Their ingenuity was left to itſelf to multiply names, as new objects occurred to their obſervation; and thus language was gradually advanced in proceſs of time to the different degrees of copiouſneſs and refinement, which it has reached among various nations.

This theory is conformable to the deſcrip-

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tion given in the Sacred Writings, and agrees very remarkably with the opinions to be collected from prophane history. Plato maintains that the original language of man was of divine formation; and when he divides words into two classes, the primitive and the derivative, he attributes the latter to the ingenuity of man, and the former to the immediate communication of the Supreme Being. The Egyptians, from whom this opinion was probably derived, maintained that by Thoth, the god of eloquence, their ancestors were at first taught to articulate [c].

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[c] Dr. Johnson talking of the origin of language said, "It must have come by inspiration: a thousand, nay a million of children could not invent a language. While the organs are pliable, there is not understanding enough to form a language; by the time that there is understanding enough, the organs are become stiff. We know that after a certain age we cannot learn to pronounce a new language. No foreigner, who comes to England, when advanced in life, ever pronounces English tolerably well; at least such instances are very rare. When I maintain that language must have come by inspiration, I do not mean that inspiration is required for rhetoric, and all the beauties of language; for *when once man has* language, we can conceive that he may gradually form modifications of it. I mean only that inspiration seems to me to be necessary to give man the faculty of speech; to inform him that he may have speech; which I think he could no more find

To whatever part of the globe we direct our view, we ſhall find additional reaſons to conclude that all the languages now ſpoken in the world were derived originally from one and the ſame ſource, notwithſtanding their apparent difference and variety. When we remark certain words in Latin, that reſemble others in Greek, we are not ſurpriſed, conſidering the intimate connexion which ſubſiſted between the two nations, and the evident derivation of the former from the latter. It is natural to ſuppoſe that the modern tongues were derived from the ancient, which were ſpoken in the ſame country. Thus all the preſent languages and dialects of Europe, amounting to about twenty-ſeven, may be traced to the Latin, German, and Sclavonian. But when we obſerve that words uſed in one quarter of the globe are like thoſe in another which is very remote, and that ſuch words have exactly the ſame ſignification, and were ſo uſed long before the preſent inhabitants had any intercourſe with each other, how is this to be accounted for? Several words in Welch are ſimilar, and have

find out without inſpiration, than cows or hogs would think of ſuch a faculty." Boſwell's Life of Johnſon, vol. iii. p. 460.

 a ſimilar

a ſimilar meaning with Latin and Greek. I am aware that this reſemblance may be imputed to their common derivation from the Celtic. But whence ariſes the affinity in ſome remarkable inſtances, between the Greek and Hebrew, Greek and Sanſcrit, Greek and Chineſe, Engliſh and Arabic, Turkiſh and Celtic, Welſh and Arabic, Latin and Otaheitan, Latin and Turkiſh, and Engliſh and Perſian?

For the anſwers to theſe queſtions, I ſhall confine myſelf principally to ſuch words as run through a variety of the languages I have mentioned: and ſeveral of theſe words certainly have the better claim to being reputed of very high antiquity, if not antediluvian, becauſe it is ſo extremely difficult to trace any modern intercourſe, ſufficient at leaſt to eſtabliſh imitation, between the nations that uſe them.

I. The word *ſack* has undergone little variation in languages either ancient or modern. שק Hebrew, *σακκος* Greek, *ſaccus* Latin, *ſack* Teutonic, Gaelic, and Welſh, *ſacco* Italian, Portugueſe, and Spaniſh, and *ſac* French.

II. *Carim* in Turkiſh, like *carus* in Latin, ſignifies *beloved*, יקר Hebrew, pretioſum, carum eſſe. *Caru* in Welſh is to love; and *καρ-*

δια,

δια, and *χαρις* in Greek, and *cor* in Latin, are from the ſame original root.

III. *Dant* in Welſh is a tooth, in Indian *dandon*, in Latin *dent*em, in Greek *οδοντα*, in Dutch *tant*, in Turkiſh *diſch*, in Saxon *ſhan*, in German *zan*, in Hebrew שן.

IV. *Bod* is Welſh for a manſion, in Perſia and India the ſame notion is expreſſed by *abad*, hence the Egyptian, Phrygian, and Macedonian *abydos*; in Engliſh it is *abode*, *abide*, *bed*, *booth*, Saxon *biden*. The world itſelf in Welſh is *byd*.

V. *Mars* is derived from the Oriental word *Mar* a lord, hence *mayor*, and *major*. The Greek Αρης, from which the Latin is certainly taken, is from the Celtic *Ar*, clades. It is curious to obſerve, that in the Otaheitan, a prince or chieftain is *Aree*.

VI. *Hen* old in Celtic, is the Highland *ſean*, the Chineſe *chan*, pronounced *ſhan*, the Latin *ſen*ex, זקן ſenuit.

VII. *Cano* in Latin is in Welſh *canu*. In Arabic *cainat* is a ſongſtreſs, Heb. קנה *canna* quâ agricolæ canere erant ſoliti.

VIII. Some Turkiſh and Tartarian words are allied to the Celtic. The Turkiſh *er*, the Tartarian *firs*, the Latin *vir* is the Celtic *ur*, and *gur*, a man.

IX. *Man* as the name for a Being is to be found

found under ſome form in a great variety of languages in the ſeveral branches of the Teutonic, Gothic, Saxon, German, Runic, &c. in the Greek *μανης* ſervus, and in the Latin ho*min*is; it exiſts in fœ*min*a and wo*man*. In Sanſcrit *Maan*-ooſho is a man.

X. *Can*is a dog, in Greek *κυων*, is in Chineſe *keuen*.

XI. *Tor* is a word extending to many languages, and conveying the ſame radical idea: it ſignifies high rock, or ſummit. *Tor* Saxon a high pointed rock, or ſummit. Pliny ſays, that the *Tor*-etæ inhabited the top of Cape Cronea—hence *το ορος*, mons, and the land *Tyra* in Egypt. From Tor comes Mam*tor* in Derbyſhire, and *Tor*bay in Devon, and Gibral*tar*, which is a Mooriſh name. Chi*tor* is a city on a high hill in India; *Tau*rus is the largeſt mountain in Aſia; *Tor*us a mountain in Sicily, near Agrigentum. Greek *τυρις* and *τυρσις* circuitus muri; *turris* Latin, טירה Chaldaic, ædes, palatium; טור a mountain, *tower*, Engliſh.

Not only the conſtruction and formation of the Engliſh and Perſian languages are remarkably ſimilar; but there are many words wholly or nearly alike. Thus *ſukar* is ſugar, *ſhireen* a ſyren, *bad* bad; *burden* to bear, *peeri* a fairy, *biden* to be, *buſs* a kiſs, *peer* an old man,

man, *teer* or *tear* moiſt, *doo* two, *pahar* four, *lib* a lip, *jamin* jeſſamine, *beſt* beſt, the ſuperlative of good; *ſemiſeer* a ſcymeter, *nam* a name, *to* thou; *oe* he, *ain* or *ein* the eye, *eiſar* eaſy[d], &c. &c.

XII. Words which denote numerals are very ſimilar in a variety of languages. Take for examples *one* and *four*; *one* in Engliſh is *unus* in Latin, ἑν Greek, *an* Saxon, *an* Gothic, *ein* German, *een* Dutch, *uno* Italian and Spaniſh, *un* French, *aon* Iriſh and Gaelic, *un* Welſh, *Uynyn* Corniſh, *Yunan* Armoric.

XIII. *Four*, in the language of the Gipſies, is *ſtaur*, Latin *quatuor*, Greek τεσσαρες, French *carre* and *quatre*, Engliſh *ſquare*, Perſic *chuhaur* and *chaur*, Welſh *pedwar*, Gothic *fidwer*, and among the Eolians πετορα.

XIV. There is the ſame reſemblance with reſpect to the name of the Supreme Being. *Deus* is δευς in Æolic, *Thoth* among the Egyptians was the name of their god Mercury, and anſwers to θεος. *Woth* and *guoth* in the Teutonic is good. *Deus* in Welſh is *Duw*, at Mangalor *Deu*, in Cambaia Maha *Deu* is magnus Deus. At Mexico *Teu*, Iriſh *Dia*, in St. Kilda *Tia*, in China, *Ti* or *Tia*. The ſounds of *d*

[d] Browne's Sketches, vol. i.

and

and *t* are very much alike, and the letters are frequently changed for each other.

XV. The term which denotes Death is in many languages of equal or perhaps greater extent. *Mors* Latin, in Greek μορος is fate, Hebrew מת to die, in Persian *mor* is death, *murden* is Turkish for mori, *mir* Arabic, at Surat *mor* is to kill, in Celtic *marw* to die, in the Oschian tongue *mard* is death, and in Islandic *mord* signifies the same as our word, which is probably of Saxon origin, *murder*. More remarkable than all is the Otaheitan *Moray*, which signifies a sepulchre.

XVI. Words which express near degrees of relationship extend very widely. *Father* in English, in Saxon is *fader*, in German *vater*, in Belgic *vader*, in Islandic and Danish *fader*, in Latin *pater*, and in Greek πατηρ: in Persian it is *pader*, in Sanscrit *peetre*. In like manner may be traced אבא *Papa*, *Abbot*, *Pope*, &c.

XVII. *Mother* is in Greek μητηρ, in Latin *mater*, in Saxon *mother*, *meder*, *medder*, in German *muater*, *muoter*, *muder*, in Spanish and Italian *madre*, in Danish *moder*, Dutch *moeter*, Persian *mader*, and in Sanscrit *matree*. *Mam*, one of the earliest words pronounced by children, is Welsh for a woman's breast, Latin *mamma*:

mamma: from giving ſuck a nurſe in Welſh is called *mammaeth*; a mother *mam*, and *mamma*; in Arabia and in Lapland it is *am*, in Hebrew אם. The Hindoos ſay *mamma* Havah, for mother Eve.

XVIII. *Brother*, *frater*—Gothic *brothar*, Daniſh *broder*, Sclavonian *bratr*, Perſian *burauder*, Galic *brathair*, in Iriſh *bratair*, Welſh *brawd*.

XIX. The *moon*—German *mon*, Daniſh *mone*, Greek *mene*, Belgic *mane*, Saxon *maen*, Laponic *manna*, Arabic *manah*, Perſian *mah* or *maw*; then, by the change of *m* for *l*, which is very common, in Latin it is *luna*, in Sclavonian *luna*, in Iriſh *luan*, in Celtic *lun*, in Greek ſe-*lene*, in Gaul *elane*, in Welſh *lhoer*, Armoric *loar*, and in Corniſh *lur*, Hebrew לבנה. The white of the moon.

XX. Αςηρ in Greek, a ſtar, in Latin *ſtella*, τελλω orior, Heb. הילל lucifer; in French *eſtoile* or *etoile*, in Perſic *ſter*, hence *Eſter*, *Eaſter*; and the Phenician *Aſtarte* in India is *ſtarra*.

XXI. Water in Welſh is *dur*, and ſo it is in Iriſh; in the Phrygian language it is *ydor*: what is this but ὑδωρ Greek, *water* Engliſh?

XXII. *Wine*—*vin* French, *vino* Ital. Spaniſh, and Portugueſe; *vinum* Latin, οινον Greek, יין Hebrew, *givin* Welſh.

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I could ſhow the coincidence in many more points between Greek and Sanſcrit, between the dialect of the Hebrides and the remote language of China: I could perhaps aſcertain the exiſtence of many Celtic and Egyptian words in China, which prove the ancient connexion between the original families of the earth, the immediate deſcendants of Japhet and Ham: but the limited nature of my work makes it neceſſary to refer ſuch of my readers as are deſirous of purſuing this curious inveſtigation, to the learned works of Sammes, Pezron, Junius, Skinner, and Parkhurſt; to Rowland's Mona, Williams's Primitive Chriſtianity, and the Etymologicon Magnum of Mr. Whiter.

This identity or near reſemblance of names which denote the ſame ideas, and thoſe ideas ſome of the moſt ſtriking and important to mankind in every age of ſociety, ſeems to point to the ſame ſource. It ſeems highly probable therefore, that one original fountain of ſpeech, and one only, has produced not only thoſe various ſtreams of diction, ſuch as the Celtic, that have been long dried up; but ſupplied thoſe likewiſe, ſuch as the languages of modern Europe, that ſtill continue to flow. Hence the hiſtory recorded by Moſes of the

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primeval race of men ſpeaking one language, and afterwards being diſperſed in conſequence of the confuſion of tongues which took place at Babel, receives ſtrong confirmation; and are facts which furniſh the beſt reaſon for the uniformity we have noticed, and which could not, on any other principle, be accounted for, in a manner ſo ſatisfactory to reaſon, or ſo conſiſtent with the tenor of ancient hiſtory.

Language kept pace with the progreſs of invention, and the cultivation of the mind urged mankind to the increaſe and improvement of the ſounds, by which its dictates were communicated to the ear. From denoting the perceptions of ſenſe, they proceeded to repreſent by words the inſtruments and operations of art, the flights of fancy, the deductions of reaſon, and the reſults of obſervation and experience. Hence may be traced the progreſs of poetry, hiſtory, and philoſophy. Thus oral expreſſion, from being in its early age the child of neceſſity, became the parent of ornament; and words, originally the rude and uncouth dreſſes of ideas, have been improved, as ſociety has advanced to higher degrees of refinement, into their moſt ſplendid and moſt beautiful decorations.

Origin and Progreſs of Letters.

To fix the fleeting ſounds as ſoon as they are breathed from the lips, and to repreſent them faithfully to the eye, by certain determinate characters, are the wonderful properties of letters. Thoſe to whom books have from their childhood been familiar, and who view literature only in its preſent advanced ſtate of improvement, cannot form a juſt eſtimate of the difficulties that attended the firſt application of ſymbols or ſigns to the expreſſion of ideas. The pictures of the Mexicans, and the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, were without doubt very ingenious devices, and mark the various efforts, which human ingenuity can make towards expreſſing what paſſes in the mind, by objects of ſight: but it comes not within the province of the art of painting to repreſent a ſucceſſion of thoughts; and its operations are very tedious and circuitous; ſo that ſuch a mode of information is very ill adapted to the activity and the variety of mental exertions. The great excellence of letters conſiſts in their ſimplicity; by a ſmall number of characters, repeated and variouſly combined, all words are expreſſed with equal preciſion and facility. They poſſeſs a decided advantage over all other

other artificial vehicles of thought, by communicating with the utmoſt eaſe the various conceptions of the mind. By their aſſiſtance in carrying on epiſtolary correſpondence, the warm effuſions of affection and friendſhip are conveyed even to the moſt remote countries; and the conſtant intercourſe of commerce, ſcience, and learning, is maintained in defiance of all the obſtacles of diſtance. Learning is indebted to letters for its diffuſion and continuance, and to them genius and virtue owe the rewards of laſting fame. Oral tradition is fleeting and uncertain: it is a ſtream, which, as it inſenſibly flows into the ocean of oblivion, is mixed with the impure ſoil of error and falſehood. But letters furniſh the unſullied memorials of truth, and impart to ſucceſſive generations the perfect records of knowledge. They conſtitute the light, glory, and ornament of civilized man; and when the voice of the philoſopher, the poet, and the ſcholar, and even the ſacred words of the Redeemer of mankind himſelf, are heard no more, letters record the bright examples of virtue, and teach the ineſtimable leſſons of ſcience, learning, and revelation to every age, and to every people.

We cannot fail to obſerve the great va-

riety in the modes of writing, which prevail in different parts of the world. Some nations, as the Chinefe, place their letters perpendicularly, and write from the top to the bottom of the page. The greateft number have followed the moft natural and eafy movement of the hand from left to right: accordingly all the nations of Europe place their letters in this order. On the contrary, it was the prevailing cuftom of the Eaft, particularly of the Egyptians, Phœnicians, Arabians, and Hebrews, to purfue the oppofite practice, and write from right to left.

Thefe various modes of arrangement may give fome plaufibility to the opinion, that each particular people were the inventors of their own alphabet. A prefumption fo favourable to national vanity has accordingly prevailed, as the Egyptians attributed the origin of their letters to Mercury, the Greeks to Cadmus, and the Latins to Saturn. This opinion arofe from the high reputation acquired by thofe who firft introduced, or made improvements in, the graphic art. For it feems highly probable, that all the alphabets now known and ufed were originally derived from one and the fame fource, and were brought, at various periods of time, into different countries.

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Can any two ſets of letters appear to the eye more diſſimilar, than the Hebrew and the Engliſh? Yet it is highly probable, that the latter were derived from the former. And if we attend to the ingenious arguments of Bp. Warburton, we may carry the origin of letters higher than to the Jewiſh nation, and refer them to the Egyptian hieroglyphics. He ſtates, upon the authority of ancient writers, that throughout many of the early ages of the world, there was a regular gradation of improvement in the manner of conveying ideas by ſigns—that pictures were firſt uſed as the repreſentatives of thoughts, and in proceſs of time alphabetical characters were ſubſtituted, as an eaſier and more compendious mode of communication, than the vague uſe of arbitrary marks [e]. Moſes, the great lawgiver of the Jews, brought letters with the reſt of his learning from Egypt; and he ſimplified their forms, in order to prevent the abuſe to which they would have been liable, as ſymbolical characters, among a people ſo much inclined to ſuperſtition as the Jews. From the Jews this alphabetical mode of writing paſſed to the Syrians and Phœnicians, or perhaps was common to them all at the ſame time.

[e] Divine Legation, v. ii. p. 387, &c.

time. The Greek authors maintained that Cadmus and his Phœnician companions introduced the knowledge of letters into Greece. Herodotus records the curious fact that he saw at Thebes in Bœotia, in the temple of Apollo, three tripods inscribed with Cadmeian letters, which very much resembled the Ionic. It is too well known to require any detail of proof, that the Romans were taught their letters by the Greeks. Tacitus has remarked the similarity of the Roman character to the most ancient Greek, that is, the Pelasgic; and the same observation is made by Pliny, and confirmed by the inscription on an ancient tablet of brass, dedicated to Minerva. By the Romans it is well known, that their alphabet was communicated to the Goths, and the nations of modern Europe. And if evidence to this detail of external proofs be wanted, the curious may furnish themselves with very sufficient arguments, in the authentic inscriptions of antiquity which time has spared, by considering attentively the order, the names, and the powers of the letters in the several alphabets just mentioned; and by examining in the learned works of Montfaucon, Shuckford, and Warburton, the characters themselves, how they have gradually been altered, and have deviated from the first

forms through ſucceſſive changes, previous to their aſſuming the ſhapes and figures under which they at preſent appear [f].

Characteriſtic Diſtinctions between ancient and modern Languages.

The formation of the modern languages of Europe is intimately connected with the hiſtory of the dark ages. The Latin language began to be corrupted in the fifth century, as ſoon as the Goths and Lombards, both of whom derived their origin from Germany had gained poſſeſſion of Italy. From the reign of Theodoric and Athalaric, who laboured to ſoften the rough manners of the Goths by the refinements of learning, the Italian language gradually aſſumed its form and character; and its deviation from the Latin was particularly marked by the uſe of articles inſtead of the variations of caſes, and of auxiliary verbs inſtead of many changes of tenſes.

[f] Stillingfleet, v. i. c. i. ſect. 20. Shuckford's Connections, v. i. p. 223. Mitford, v. i. p. 88. Herodotus, l. v. Terpſich. ſect. 58, 59. p. 306. edit. Gronov. Taciti Ann. l. xi. Plinii Nat. Hiſt. l. vii. c. lviii. Goguet's Origin of Laws, v. i. p. 177.

In proportion as the Goths made more ſucceſsful and extenſive ravages in the Roman empire, their phraſeology was blended with that of their captives, and the coarſe dialect of Provence and Sicily contributed many ingredients to the compoſition of the Italian language; in the ſame manner as the fuſion of the precious and baſer metals at the conflagration of Corinth produced the valuable mixture, which derives its name from that celebrated city. As in the features of the Italian ladies, the curious traveller may now diſcern a ſtriking likeneſs of the faces engraved on antique gems; ſo in the language of that country, he may diſcover a ſtrong reſemblance to the original from which it is derived. If it wants the ſtrength and majeſty of the Latin, it inherits that delicacy and melodious flow of expreſſion, which never fail to charm every reader of taſte in the works of Dante, Arioſto, Petrarch, Machiavel, Algarotti, and Metaſtaſio. It is the ſingular glory of Italy, that while the early poets and hiſtorians of France and England are become in a great meaſure obſolete, her writers, who flouriſhed ſo early as the fourteenth century, are read with the faſhionable authors of the preſent times, and ſhare their popularity and applauſe.

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In the fifth century, the Franks, a people of Germany, under the command of Pharamond invaded France, and conquered its ancient inhabitants, the Celts and Romans. By a mixture of the dialect of these people the French language was formed, which gradually polishing the rude expressions and uncouth phraseology observable in its first writers, has acquired in later times a great degree of precision, delicacy, and elegance.

Between the languages of Greece and Rome, and those of modern times, a very remarkable difference prevails. The prepositions of the latter supply the place of the cases of the former; and as these prepositions are of a very abstract and general nature, they shew the progress of the moderns in metaphysical reasoning. Auxiliary verbs are used instead of many of the ancient tenses: these forms of expression contribute greatly to simplify modern languages, in point of rudiments and first principles, and consequently render them more easy to be acquired. Still however they are subject to faults, which nearly counterbalance their excellence; for they are weaker in expression, less harmonious and agreeable to the ear, and, as the construction of the words necessarily fixes them

them to particular ſituations in a ſentence, they are leſs adapted to the uſes of poetry.

Another very remarkable diſtinction prevails in poetry. Thoſe effuſions of fancy which the moderns expreſs in rhyme, the ancients conveyed in metre. In the claſſic authors, the quantity of words is fixed, the various combinations of long and ſhort ſyllables give a pleaſing variety to pronunciation, both in proſe and verſe, and render every word more diſtinct and harmonious to the ear. Rhyme was the invention of a dark and taſteleſs age, and is generally thought, when it predominates in the poetry of a language, as it does in the French, to indicate a want of ſtrength and ſpirit. It is the glory of the Engliſh language to be capable of ſupporting blank verſe; which the French, from its want of energy and vigour, cannot admit even in tragic compoſition.

Rhyme is frequently the ſource of redundancy and feebleneſs of expreſſion; as even among the moſt admired writers inſtances frequently occur of the ſenſe being ſo much expanded, as to be on that account extremely weakened, becauſe the poet is under the neceſſity of cloſing his couplets with correſpond-

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ing ſounds. The tranſlation of Homer by Pope, and of Virgil by Dryden, afford ſtriking proofs of the truth of this obſervation. The verboſe paſſages in many of the fineſt tragedies of Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire, ariſe from the ſame cauſe. In rhyme the ſenſe is uſually cloſed with the firſt line, or at leaſt with the ſecond. This produces a tedious uniformity, which is particularly unpleaſing to thoſe, whoſe ears are accuſtomed to the varied periods of the claſſic authors. Rhyme appears not ſo well adapted to grand and long, as to gay and ſhort compoſitions. Its perpetual repetition in the Henriade of Voltaire is tireſome: in the ſtanzas of the Fairy Queen of Spenſer its recurrence, although ſtated and uniform, is more tolerable, becauſe the pauſes are more varied: but it certainly is of all compoſitions beſt ſuited to the lively turn of an epigram, and the ludicrous deſcriptions of the mock-heroic. As a proof how little rhyme can contribute to the eſſential beauties of poetry, thoſe perſons are eſteemed the beſt readers, who pay the leaſt regard to its regular and ſtated return, and attend only to ſuch pauſes, as the ſenſe of an author naturally points out. This may be conſidered as no ſlight proof of the compara-

tive excellence of good blank verſe, and the ancient metrical compoſitions.

A wider and more accurate ſurvey of nature, and a more diligent cultivation of art, by gradually opening new channels of knowledge, have increaſed the number of words. Hence we find, that the moderns excel the ancients in copiouſneſs of language upon many ſubjects, of which abundant inſtances occur in the terms which expreſs certain metals, ſemimetals, earths, plants, animals, amuſements, and recreations, various machines, implements, and materials employed in agriculture, navigation, and chemiſtry. In ſeveral branches of ſcience, in addition to all that was before aſcertained, diſcoveries have been made, which were entirely unknown in ancient times.

This greater extent and variety of knowledge reſult from the operations of the ſpirit of enterprize, and the diligent ardour of reſearch, which have explored new paths, and improved upon former diſcoveries. But it may abate the triumph of the moderns to reflect, that much of their ſuperior knowledge may be the natural conſequence of living in the later ages of the world. Future generations,

tions, if they are active and inquiſitive, will poſſeſs the ſame aſcendency over the preſent; and the advancement of language will continue to be proportionate to the progreſs of the arts and ſciences.

By tracing the variety of languages and alphabets to one ſource, we ſimplify ſubjects of curious inquiry; and we extricate ourſelves from that perplexity, in which we ſhould be involved, if we rejected an opinion ſo conformable to reaſon, and which the more accurate our examination into ancient hiſtory is, the more grounds we find to adopt. And it is a pleaſing circumſtance to obſerve, that while we maintain a ſyſtem, ſupported by the moſt reſpectable profane authorities, we ſtrengthen the arguments in favour of the high antiquity of the Jewiſh language, and corroborate, with reſpect to its origin, the relations of the holy Scriptures.

Our remarks likewiſe on the nature of language, both ancient and modern, and their comparative excellence and defects, may lead to many uſeful inquiries and reflections, as the progreſs of human knowledge is ſo cloſely connected with the ſubject. The art of writing has been the great means of enlightening

the underſtanding, and ſoftening the manners of mankind, and the great inſtrument of civilizing ſociety, and ſtrengthening the ties of ſocial life. To conſider the advantages, which the improvement of languages, and of this art, have conferred upon mankind, would open a boundleſs field of obſervation. It belongs only to our preſent plan to direct the attention to thoſe particular nations, whoſe languages and hiſtory form the immediate ſubjects of our inquiries.

CHAPTER II.

The English Language.

THE impreſſions made by the conquerors who have ſettled in any particular nation are in few reſpects more clearly to be traced, than by the change they have produced in the language of the natives. This obſervation may be applied with peculiar propriety to our own country: for after the Saxons had ſubdued the Britons, they introduced into England their own language, which was a dialect of the Teutonic or Gothic. From the fragments of the Saxon laws, hiſtory, and poetry ſtill extant, we have many proofs to convince us, that it was capable of expreſſing with a great degree of copiouſneſs and energy the ſentiments of a civilized people. For a period of ſix hundred years no conſiderable variation took place. William the Conqueror promoted another change of language, which had been begun by Edward the Confeſſor, and cauſed the Norman French to be uſed, both in his own palace, and in the courts of juſtice; and it became in a ſhort time current among all the higher orders of his ſubjects.

jects. The conſtant intercourſe, which ſubſiſted between France and England for ſeveral centuries, introduced a very conſiderable addition of terms; and they were adopted with very ſlight deviation from their original, as is evident from the works of our early writers, particularly Chaucer, Gower, and Wickliffe, and many other authors quoted by Warton in his curious and entertaining Hiſtory of Engliſh Poetry. Such were the grand ſources of the Engliſh tongue; but the ſtream has been from time to time augmented by the copious influx of the Latin and other languages, with which the purſuits of commerce, the cultivation of learning, and the progreſs of the arts, have made our anceſtors and ourſelves acquainted.

The ſame countries, which have ſupplied the Engliſh with improvements, have furniſhed the various terms by which they are denoted. Muſic, ſculpture, and painting, borrowed their expreſſions from Italy; the words uſed in navigation are taken from the inhabitants of Flanders and Holland; the French have ſupplied the expreſſions uſed in fortification and military affairs. The terms of mathematics and philoſophy are borrowed from Latin and Greek. In the Saxon may

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be found all words of general uſe, as well as thoſe which belong to agriculture, and the common mechanical arts.

But notwithſtanding the Engliſh language can boaſt of ſo little ſimplicity as to its origin, yet in its grammatical conſtruction it bears a cloſe reſemblance to the moſt ſimple language of antiquity[e]. Its words depart leſs from the original form, than thoſe of any other modern tongues. In the ſubſtantives there is but one variation of caſe; and it is only by the different degrees of compariſon, that changes are made in the adjectives. There is only one conjugation of the verbs, ſome of which indeed are not varied at all, and others have only two or three changes of termination. Almoſt all the modifications of time are expreſſed by auxiliary verbs; and the verbs themſelves preſerve in many inſtances very nearly, and in ſome caſes exactly, their radical form in the different tenſes. The diſcriminating powers of theſe auxiliary verbs are of great uſe in expreſſing the different moods. The article poſſeſſes a

[e] This is the remark of Biſhop Lowth, whoſe well-known proficiency in Hebrew ſtudies qualified him to paſs the beſt judgment upon the ſubject.

ſtriking peculiarity, differing from that in moſt other languages, for it is indeclinable, and common to all genders. This ſimplicity of ſtructure renders our language much eaſier to a learner than Italian or French, in which the variations of the verbs in particular are very numerous, complex, and difficult to be retained.

The Engliſh language is uniform in its compoſition, and its irregularities are far from being numerous. The diſtinctions in the genders of nouns are agreeable to the nature of things, and are not applied with that caprice, which prevails in many other languages. The order of conſtruction is more eaſy and ſimple, than that of Latin and Greek; it has no genders of adjectives, nor any gerunds, ſupines, or variety of conjugations. Theſe peculiarities give it a philoſophical character; and as its terms are ſtrong, expreſſive, and copious, no language ſeems better calculated to facilitate the intercourſe of mankind, as a univerſal medium of communication.

Since the Grammars of Lowth and Prieſtley, and the Dictionary of Johnſon have been publiſhed, our language has been brought

nearer to a fixed ſtandard. It is now conſidered, more than ever, as an object of grammatical rules, and regular ſyntax. Its idioms are more accurately aſcertained by a compariſon of paſſages ſelected from the beſt authors. The derivations are traced from their original ſources with greater preciſion; and its orthography is now more reduced to ſettled rules. To the labours of Johnſon, as a Lexicographer, our nation is under great obligations; and if he has in ſome inſtances failed in diligence of reſearch, or extent of plan, we muſt at leaſt be ready to allow, that he has contributed more than any of his countrymen towards the elucidation of his ſubject; he has given his definitions of words with great clearneſs, and confirmed them by a detail of quotations from the beſt authors. There is perhaps no book, profeſſedly written upon a philological ſubject, that can give to foreigners as well as to natives, ſo juſt and advantageous an idea of our language, or of the variety and the excellence of our writers.

The derivation of Engliſh words, as far as it relates to Latin and Greek, has been frequently and ſatisfactorily traced: but thoſe which are of Saxon origin were a long time prevalent without ſufficient inveſtigation. The

Author of the "Diverſions of Purley[f]," whoſe natural acuteneſs and turn for metaphyſical reſearch peculiarly qualified him for ſuch a taſk, has directed his attention to the ſubject; and the ingenious theory which he has formed, reſpecting the origin of the indeclinable parts of ſpeech, was remarkably confirmed by his knowledge of Saxon. He has proved very clearly, that many of our adverbs, conjunctions, and prepoſitions, which are commonly thought to have no ſignification, when detached from other words, are derived from obſolete verbs, or nouns, the meaning of which they reſpectively retain; but which have been ſhortened for general convenience, and corrupted by length of time. Such a diſcovery is valuable, not only on account of the light it throws upon thoſe parts of our language which have been too ſlightly regarded by all former grammarians; but for the aſſiſtance it affords to the ſcience of etymology in general.

Dr. Johnſon, in the Preface to his Dictionary, has declaimed againſt tranſlations as the bane of language: but the learned and ingenious Author of "the Hiſtory of Engliſh

[f] P. 185, &c.

Poetry"

Poetry" obſerves on the contrary, that our language derived great benefits from the tranſlations of the claſſics in the ſixteenth century. This difference of opinion may probably be reconciled, by ſuppoſing that theſe writers advert to the ſtate of a language at different periods of time. When it is in its dawn of improvement, the addition of foreign terms may be requiſite to keep pace with the influx of new ideas. In a more advanced period of arts and civilization, ſuch an increaſe is not only unneceſſary, but may be injurious; and the practice ſeems as needleſs, as the introduction of foreign troops for the defence of a country, when its natives alone are ſufficient for its protection.

Beauties of the Engliſh Language.

A language, which has been ſo much indebted to others, both ancient and modern, muſt of courſe be very copious and expreſſive. In theſe reſpects perhaps it may be brought into competition with any one now ſpoken in the world. No Engliſhman has had reaſon to complain, ſince our tongue has reached its preſent degree of excellence, that his ideas could not be adequately expreſſed, or clothed in a ſuitable dreſs. No author has been under the neceſſity of writing in a fo-

reign language, on account of its ſuperiority to our own. Whether we open the volumes of our divines, philoſophers, hiſtorians, or artiſts, we ſhall find that they abound with all the terms neceſſary to communicate their obſervations and diſcoveries, and give to their readers the moſt complete views of their reſpective ſubjects. Hence it appears, that our language is ſufficiently capacious for all purpoſes, and can give proper and adequate expreſſion to variety of argument, delicacy of taſte, and fervour of genius. And that it has ſufficient copiouſneſs to communicate to mankind every action, event, invention, and obſervation, in a full, clear, and elegant manner, we can prove by an appeal to the authors, who are at preſent moſt admired and eſteemed by all perſons of correct judgment.

But its excellence is perhaps in few reſpects diſplayed to ſuch advantage, as in the productions of our poets. Whoever reads the works of Shakeſpeare, Spenſer, Milton, Dryden, and Pope, will be ſenſible that they employ a kind of phraſeology which may be ſaid to be ſacred to the Muſes. It is diſtinguiſhed from proſe, not merely by the harmony of numbers, but by the great variety of its appropriate terms and phraſes. A conſiderable degree of

beauty

beauty reſults likewiſe from the different meaſures employed in poetry. The Allegro and Penſeroſo of Milton, Alexander's Feaſt by Dryden, the Ode to the Paſſions by Collins, and the Bard of Gray, are as complete examples of verſification, judiciouſly varied according to the nature of the ſubjects, as they are ſpecimens of exquiſite ſentiment and original genius.

One of the moſt beautiful figures in poetry is the perſonification of inanimate objects. The genius of our language enables the Engliſh poet to give the moſt ſtriking effect to this figure, as the genders of nouns are not arbitrarily impoſed, but may be varied according to the nature of the ſubject. Thus the poet can eſtabliſh the moſt ſtriking diſtinction between verſe and proſe, and communicate to his deſcriptions that ſpirit and animation, which cannot fail to ſtrike every reader of taſte. It muſt however be acknowledged, that it is chiefly to grave ſubjects—to the details of the hiſtorian, the arguments of the politician and the divine, the ſpeculations of the philoſopher, and the invention of the epic and the tragic poet, that our expreſſions are beſt adapted. It has energy, and it has copiouſneſs; but it accords not

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ſo well with the mirth of the gay, or the pathos of the diſtreſſed, as ſome other languages. In deſcribing the pleaſantries of the mind, in the effuſions of delicate humour, the ſallies of wit, and the trifling levities of ſocial intercourſe, the French poſſeſs a decided advantage. In delineating the tender paſſions, the ſoothing of pity, and the ardour of love, we muſt yield the ſuperiority to the ſofter cadence of Italian ſyllables.

Defects of the Engliſh Language.

Although it is natural to indulge a partiality to our native language, as well as to our native ſoil; yet this prepoſſeſſion ought not to make us blind to the defects either of the one or the other. We ſhall only advert to the principal imperfections of the language. Moſt of the words, except ſuch as are of Roman or Grecian origin, are monoſyllables, and are terminated by conſonants; and this makes our pronunciation rugged and broken, and unlike the regular and eaſy flow of claſſic phraſeology. Many of them are harſh and inharmonious; and there are ſome ſyllables, which can ſcarcely be pronounced by an Italian or a Frenchman, whoſe organs of ſpeech are habituated to ſofter expreſſions. "It is to the conſonant terminations that the harſhneſs of our

our language may be imputed. The melody of a language depends greatly upon its vowel terminations. In English not more than a dozen common words end in *a*: about two dozen end in *o*. In *y* we have no less than 4900 words, about an eighth of our language; our words amounting to about 35,000[g]."

The want of different terminations in verbs, as it introduces the frequent use of auxiliary verbs, too frequently obliges us to express our meaning by circumlocutions. There is no distinction in the persons of the plural number of verbs, nor in the tenses or persons of the passive voice. This is oftentimes the cause of ambiguity; and foreigners, in the perusal of our books, must be very much at a loss, without the closest attention to the preceding and subsequent parts of sentences, to understand the particular sense of many passages. Our accents are calculated to give considerable variety to pronunciation; but the prevailing mode of throwing them back, in some cases, to the first syllable of a word, in a great degree destroys their use; and gives an indistinct, hurried, and almost unintelligible sound to the other syllables. None of the

[g] Heron's Letters, p. 247.

modern languages of Europe are ſo ſtrongly marked by accents as our own. Their peculiar advantage is evident in poetry, as we are enabled to ſupport the varied numbers of blank verſe; and this circumſtance gives us a decided ſuperiority over the French. Zealous as ſome authors have been to eſtabliſh the excellence of Engliſh with reſpect to quantity, and to prove that it is in itſelf harmonious and muſical, we muſt, after all their ingenious arguments, be obliged to leave to the Greeks and Latins the regular and uniform diſtinctions of long and ſhort ſyllables; for although there are many of our words, which we can affirm to be long or ſhort; yet a great number of them cannot be ſaid to be of any determinate quantity.

The mode of ſpelling appears to have been in former times extremely vague and unſettled. It is not uncommon to find in our old writers the ſame word ſpelt differently, even in the ſame page. Orthography began to be more an object of attention, and was reſcued from its great uncertainty, at the beginning of the laſt century. Yet authors of conſiderable eminence have differed much from each other in their modes of ſpelling ſome particular words, and have adjuſted their

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practice to their own ideas of propriety. This has given a very stiff and pedantic appearance to their writings. Nor has the influence of their authority had any effect upon the prevailing customs, or rescued them from the imputation of singularity and affectation. Dr. Lardner was desirous of reviving the old mode of spelling in some instances, as in *goodnesse*, *forgivenesse*, &c. Benson, a commentator on St. Paul's Epistles, wrote *præface*, *præfix*, *prævail*, *procede*, *persue*, and *explane*, like Lardner. Dr. Middleton, a more elegant writer, attempted similar innovations; and Upton, the learned commentator on Shakespeare, tires his readers by the repetition of the word *tast* for the substantive taste.

Our orthography remained in this fluctuating state, till at length what was the general wish, what many had attempted in vain, and what seemed to require the united efforts of numbers, was accomplished by the diligence and the acuteness of one man. "Dr. Johnson published his Dictionary; and as the weight of truth and reason is irresistible, its authority has nearly fixed the external form of our language, and from its decisions few appeals have yet been made. Indeed so convenient is it to have one acknowledged standard to recur to—

so

ſo much preferable, in matters of this nature, is a trifling degree of irregularity to a continual change, and fruitleſs purſuit of unattainable perfection, that it is earneſtly to be hoped, that no author will henceforth on ſlight grounds be tempted to innovate. The innovations even of Voltaire have judiciouſly been rejected in France. Dr. Johnſon is every where the declared enemy of unneceſſary innovation. The principles, on which he founds his improvements, are the ſtable ones of etymology and analogy: the former ſcience will not ſoon be more completely underſtood than it was by him; and if in the latter, a few ſteps may have been made beyond the limits of his obſervation, they have been gained only by the purſuit of minute reſearches, inconſiſtent with the greatneſs of his undertaking[h]."

It is the opinion of this learned Lexicographer, that as we received many of our words originally of Latin derivation, through the medium of the French, we ought to follow the latter mode of ſpelling in preference to the former. Good as this general rule may be thought, there are ſome exceptions,

[h] Nares's Orthoepy, p. 269.

which

which in compliance with prevailing custom he readily admits himself. "The rule required him to write *en*quire from the French enquerir, not inquire. The termination in *our* is one of those which has created much dispute. At present the practice seems to favour the rejection of *u* in all words of more than two syllables. Johnson spells auth*or* without a final u, but always writes hono*ur* and favo*ur* [i]."

It may be remarked as a general rule, that the most judicious attention that can be paid to orthography in general, must necessarily consist in distinguishing those irregularities which are inherent in the language itself, from those introduced by the capricious, the fashionable, and the ignorant.

The preceding observations have chiefly related to words considered by themselves. It may be proper, in the next place, to make some remarks upon our composition, or the arrangement and connexion of words, as they constitute sentences. In this respect all modern languages fall short of the ancient, which are distinguished by a peculiar roundness, har-

[i] Nares, p. 276.

mony, and compaſs of period. The Greeks and Romans, by having different genders and terminations of their verbs and nouns, gave a preciſion to their meaning, which enabled them to diverſify the order of conſtruction, in an infinite variety of modes, without any injury to the general ſenſe. Of this advantage our language is in a great degree incapable, by reaſon of the ſimplicity of its ſtructure. It will indeed admit of the tranſpoſition of the members of a ſentence; but the tranſpoſition of words, except in poetry, ſeems to be contrary to its genius. Our words in general are placed in the natural order of conſtruction; and to this ſtandard we endeavour to reduce both our literal and free tranſlations of Greek and Latin authors: in the works of our writers we ſeek in vain for that condenſeneſs of ideas, and for thoſe cloſe and connected parts of a ſentence, and that judicious poſition of the principal idea in the moſt advantageous place, which have ſo ſtriking an effect in the compoſition of the claſſics.

Sir T. Browne—Dr. Johnſon—Mr. Gibbon.

The cultivation of the learned languages, ſince the reign of Henry VIII. introduced many words of Latin origin into the converſation and the writings of the Engliſh. The atten-

attention paid to Italian literature, particularly in the reign of Elizabeth, contributed to increaſe their number. In the works of Shakeſpeare we find many ſuch words; and thoſe, which his imperfect knowledge of Latin and Greek did not afford him the opportunity of taking immediately from the claſſics, he probably borrowed from the ſame tranſlations, which furniſhed many of his plots, ſpeeches, and characters. Yet he ſeems to have conſidered the too free admiſſion of this ſtrange phraſeology as an object of occaſional cenſure, and has therefore expoſed it to ridicule with great effect in the ludicrous characters of Holofernes and Piſtol. The dramatic productions of Ben Johnſon his contemporary are much more ſtrongly marked by theſe exotic conceits. But of all our writers of thoſe times no one ſeems to have been ſo ambitious of the ſtiff and pompous decorations of a latiniſed ſtyle, as the author of "the Vulgar Errors." His ſentences are ſo replete with words, which differ only from Latin in their terminations, that he is entitled to the firſt place in the ſchool of pedantry. It is very extraordinary, that his own obſervation, which was levelled againſt thoſe who indulged in this practice, recoils with the greateſt force upon himſelf. "If ele-

gancie ſtill precedeth, and Engliſh pens maintain that ſtream we have of late obſerved to flow from many, we ſhall within few years be fain to learne Latine to underſtand Engliſh, and a work will prove of equal facility in either[k]."

The affected ſtructure of his ſtyle is apparent even from the firſt ſentence of the above mentioned work. "Would truth diſpenſe, we could be content, with Plato, that knowledge were but remembrance, that intellectual acquiſition were but reminiſcential evocation, &c." That many of his words may be tranſlated into Latin with little more than a change in their terminations, the following paſſages will ſhow. "Scintillations are not the accenſion of the air upon the colliſion of two hard bodies, but rather the inflammable effluencies diſcharged from the bodies collided." "Ice is figured in its guttulous deſcent from the air, and grows greater or leſſer according unto the accretion or pluvious aggelation about the mother and fundamental atoms thereof[l]."

[k] Preface to the Vulgar Errors.

[l] P. 40, 41.

There is ſufficient ground to ſuppoſe, that Dr. Johnſon formed his ſtyle upon the model of Sir T. Browne. He has written his life; has quoted in his Dictionary many of his words, unſupported by any other authority; and perhaps in his works, it would not be difficult to trace ſome plain marks of direct imitation.

Between the opinions and the practice of Johnſon there is a ſtriking inconſiſtency; for in the Preface to his Dictionary, he regrets that our language had been for ſome time gradually departing from its ancient Teutonic character; and yet in his works he promotes this departure in the moſt ſtudious manner. From the writer of an Engliſh dictionary might naturally be expected a cloſe adherence to idiom, and that he would mark the line of diſtinction very ſtrongly between ſuch words and phraſes as were unſupported by ſufficient authority, and ſuch had been fully ſanctioned by the uſage of the beſt authors. And from a writer, whoſe profeſſed purpoſe it was to recommend the beauties of moral truth to the different ranks of the public at large, and to render topics of criticiſm intelligible and popular, we ſhould expect few modes of expreſſion, that were pedantic or affected. Whether

ther we conſider the nature of his Eſſays, or the general uſe for which they were intended, it muſt be evident, that ſuch ſubjects call for peculiar perſpicuity of expreſſion. Johnſon ſeems to have judged the ſtyle of the Spectator more worthy of praiſe, than proper for his imitation. Our literature indeed dates a new era from the publication of his works: many of his words are rarely to be met with in former writers, and ſome are purely of his own fabrication [m]. By endeavouring to avoid low and familiar expreſſions, he is frequently lofty and turgid; and to a reader unacquainted with the learned languages muſt ſometimes be wholly unintelligible. His new

[m] *Reſuſcitation*, *orbity*, *volant*, *fatuity*, *divaricate*, *aſinine*, *narcotic*, *vulnerary*, *empireumatic*, *papilionaceous*, *obtund*, *diſruption*, *ſenſory*, *cremation*, *horticulture*, *germination*, *decuſſation*, *eximious*, *&c.*

If theſe words be not peculiarly Johnſon's, I know not where they are to be found. He who loves to drink only from the pure wells of Engliſh undefiled, may think they ought to be inſerted in the Index Expurgatorius of our language.

Where did Warton find ſuch words as *doctorated*, *fugacious*; or Bolingbroke ſuch as *incumberment*, *martyriſed*, *eucharisſty*, *connexity*, *platonician*, *ſtoician*; or Shafteſbury ſuch compounds as *ſelf-end*, *ſelf-paſſion*, *home-dialect*, *and mirrour-writing*; or Arthur Young his expreſſive term *acclimated?*

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modes of expreſſion, his involution of periods, his frequent uſe of the ſubſtantive inſtead of the adjective, and his ſtated introduction of triads, are peculiarities, if not innovations, which have drawn after him a train of imitators. Some of them indeed are entitled to praiſe on account of their poſſeſſing ſufficient judgment to keep their ſtyle in conſtant ſubſerviency to their thoughts; and others have expoſed themſelves to ridicule by the ludicrous aſſociation of pompous words with feeble and trite ideas.

If our ſubject required us to weigh the general merits of this celebrated author, as well as to remark the peculiarities of his ſtyle, we ſhould readily concur in the commendation beſtowed upon his tranſcendent abilities, and acknowledge, that the energy of his language was oftentimes a ſufficient apology for its elaborate pomp, and that our cenſure muſt in ſome degree abate its ſeverity, when we conſider the force and the diſcrimination of his terms, the correctneſs, variety, and ſplendour of his imagery, the power of his underſtanding, his love of virtue and religion, and his zeal for their promotion, ſo extremely well adapted to the different characters he ſuſ- tained

tained in the literary world as a moralist, a philologist, and a critic.

In the course of our remarks upon this subject, the historian of "the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" claims some share of our attention. It is a great misfortune for the public, and particularly for the younger part of his readers, considering the great popularity of his works, that he has concealed the poison of infidelity under a honied sweetness of style. Skilled in all the arts of declamation, and studious to please and to amuse us at the expence of correctness of taste, he has confounded the diction of a poet with that of an historian; his arrangement of sentences is frequently so much alike, and they are formed in so mechanical a manner, that they seem to have been constructed according to one particular rule. Although many of his characters are finely drawn, and many of his descriptions are lively and beautiful; yet his verboseness frequently fatigues the attention, and his obscurity perplexes it. He endeavours, and often with unsuccessful pains, to give dignity to trifles, and to adorn every subject, whether trivial or important, with the flowery ornaments of description.

ſcription. In various inſtances he muſt offend the judgment of thoſe who wiſh to ſee the different kinds of compoſition confined within their due limits, and more particularly expect, that an hiſtorian ſhould not depart, either in point of dignity of character, or propriety of expreſſion, from the rules of correct compoſition. A careful reader of Gibbon will obſerve, that his affectation oftentimes renders his meaning very obſcure; that he deviates from the ſtandard of our language by the frequent tranſpoſition of the members of his ſentences, and by uſing words in new and unauthoriſed ſenſes; by borrowing French ornaments of ſtyle, and by ſometimes adopting the French idiom.

It is not eaſy to eſtimate how much the Scotch have contributed to the value and the importance of literature. In every department they have exerted themſelves with no leſs diligence than talents. We ſhould deſervedly be regarded as too faſtidious and rigid, if we were to criticiſe their mode of expreſſion with too much ſeverity. We may however be allowed to obſerve, that their firſt publications are often marked by thoſe Scotticiſms, or national peculiarities, which are in ſucceeding editions expunged. Hume, Robertſon,

ſon, and Blair, by careful reviſions have refined and poliſhed their works, which have very high pretenſions to occupy a place next to that of the Engliſh claſſics.

We are the more deſirous of pointing out the defects of Johnſon and Gibbon on account of their great reputation. We ought not to be dazzled with the ſplendour of their names; and as we are ready to give due praiſe to their beauties, it cannot fairly be required that we ſhould palliate, or conceal their defects.

If writers will contribute to make our language unneceſſarily more parti-coloured and motley than it was before; if they deliberately add to its corruptions, and haſten its decline, they are juſt objects of cenſure: and unleſs their deviations from its idiom be remarked and avoided, how can the diſtinction between a pure and a vitiated ſtyle be preſerved? Without attention to ſome rules, without a proper diſcrimination between bad and good models, the language will degenerate, and the ſterling ore of the Engliſh tongue will finally loſe its value, its weight, and its luſtre, by being mixed with the droſs of French frivolouſneſs, and the alloy of learned affectation.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER III.

The Subject continued.

OUR language ought to be conſidered not only with a view to its grammatical propriety, but as a ſubject of taſte. In order to avoid the errors of thoſe who have been led aſtray by affectation and falſe refinement, and to form a proper opinion of its genuine idiom, it is neceſſary to peruſe the works of the beſt and moſt approved writers.

In the various departments of religion, hiſtory, poetry, and general literature, we will endeavour to point out ſome writers of the pureſt Engliſh—but without any wiſh to detract from the merits of thoſe, whom the limited nature of our work, and not an inſenſibility or an ignorance of their merit, may make it neceſſary to omit.

Let the reader commence his ſtudies with thoſe who were moſt diſtinguiſhed in the reign of Elizabeth, when the language began to be refined from its original roughneſs,

neſs, aſſumed a fuller form, and was marked by more diſtinct features; and let him purſue his progreſs down to the preſent times. Nor ought he to be deterred from this deſign by an apprehenſion, that he will find the old authors clothed in the garb of rude and uncouth antiquity; for he will make the pleaſing diſcovery, that the language of his forefathers differs in no great degree from his own, in point of ſtructure and formation, and the general meaning of words.

The ſubſtance of a language remains for ages unaltered, however the influx of new cuſtoms, and the inventions or the improvements of arts, may occaſion ſome addition to its terms, and ſome change in its orthography and pronunciation. Shakeſpeare will of courſe attract his early attention; and he will find in his incomparable dramas ſuch an accommodation of ſtyle to the grave and the gay, the rough and the poliſhed, the heroic and the vulgar characters of his plays, as ſhews that our language was ſufficiently ſtrong and copious to be a proper vehicle for the conceptions of his vaſt and wonderful genius. The works of Speed, Aſcham, Raleigh, Taylor, Clarendon, and Temple, are highly to be valued for the vigour and com-

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paſs of their diction, as well as the diſplay of extenſive knowledge and eminent abilities. The common tranſlation of the Bible, excluſive of the important nature of its contents, deſerves great attention. The nature and compaſs of its phraſeology are ſuch, as prove no leſs the powers of the language, than the correct judgment of the tranſlators. The words are, for the moſt part, elegant and expreſſive, and convey the ſublime ideas of the original, without coarſeneſs or familiarity on the one hand, or pedantry and affectation on the other. The manly and dignified proſe, and the rich and ſublime poetry of Milton, far from being degraded or fettered, are exalted and adorned by their ſtyle; and it was his peculiar glory, to apply with conſummate taſte and ſkill the flowing and unſhackled periods of blank verſe, to the majeſty of an epic poem. The increaſing tribute of praiſe has in every age ſubſequent to his own been paid to the ſtores of his vaſt erudition, and the flights of his tranſcendent genius.

In the reign of Charles II. the reader will find no author more worthy of his attention than Barrow, whoſe periods are ſo round and exuberant, as to give a juſt repreſentation of the eloquence of Cicero. They diſplay to the

the greatest advantage the energy and the fertility of his intellectual powers, employed upon the most important subjects of morality and religion.

The great Locke, in a plain and severe style, well adapted to the philosophical precision of his researches, unravelled the intricacies of the most interesting branch of philosophy by tracing ideas to their source, and developing the faculties of the mind. In the illustrious reign of Anne, when Britain reached a degree of glory in literature and arts, which might be put in competition with the age of Pericles, or Augustus; Swift in clear and familiar diction, unaided by flowery ornaments, expressed the dictates of a strong understanding, and lively invention. Addison, the accomplished scholar, the refined critic, and the enlightened moralist, like another Socrates brought moral philosophy from the schools, arrayed her in the most engaging dress, called the attention of his countrymen to taste and to virtue, in his elegant and entertaining essays[a]. The prefaces of Dryden

[a] As I have always been from early life an enthusiastic admirer of Addison, considered as a moral writer, I cannot characterise his merits in a manner more correspondent with

are marked by the eaſe and the vivacity of a man of tranſcendent genius; and there is a facility in his rhymes, and a peculiar vigour in his poetry, which render him juſtly the boaſt of our country. Pope compoſed his prefaces and letters with peculiar grace and beauty of ſtyle; and his poems preſent the fineſt ſpecimens of exquiſite judgment, adorned by the moſt harmonious and poliſhed verſification.

The works of Melmoth, particularly his letters and tranſlations of Cicero and Pliny, are remarkable for ſmoothneſs and elegance of compoſition. The late Preſident of the Royal Academy has, in his lectures, illuſtrated the principles of his delightful art, in a manner no leſs creditable to him as a fine writer, than as an eminent painter, and a perfect connoiſſeur. The ſacred diſcourſes of the amiable Horne recommend the duties of that

with my original feelings of reſpect, than by applying to him the ſentiments which Eraſmus has expreſſed of Cicero. "Certe nunquam mihi magis placuit Cicero tum, quum adamarem illa ſtudia, quam nunc placet ſeni: non tantum ob divinam quandam orationis felicitatem, verum etiam ob pectoris eruditi ſanctimoniam, profecto meum afflavit animum, meque mihi reddidit meliorem."

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holy religion of which he was ſo bright an ornament, in a ſweet and lively ſtyle. The manly vigour of Biſhop Watſon diffuſes its animation through all his works, whether philoſophical, controverſial, or religious. And where can we find compoſitions, which unite the politeneſs of the gentleman with the attainments of the ſcholar, blended in juſter proportions, than in the Polymetis of Spence, the Athenian Letters, the Dialogues of Lord Littleton and Biſhop Hurd, and the papers of the Adventurer, and the Obſerver?

Theſe are ſome of the principal ſources, from which may be derived a proper knowledge of the purity, the ſtrength, and the copiouſneſs of the Engliſh language. Such are the examples, by which our ſtyle ought to be regulated. In them may be remarked the idiomatic ſtructure of ſentences, and the proper arrangements of their parts. They preſent ſpecimens of purity without ſtiffneſs, and elegance without affectation; they are free both from pomp and vulgarity of diction, and their authors have the happy art of pleaſing our taſte, while they improve our underſtandings, and confirm our principles of morality and religion.

In the courſe of this peruſal it will be found, that in proportion as the great controverſies upon religion, politics, and philoſophy began to ſubſide ſince the time of the Revolution, a more cloſe attention has been paid to the niceties of grammar and criticiſm; and coarſe and barbarous phraſeology has been gradually poliſhed into propriety and elegance.

As the practice of writing for public inſpection has been much improved ſince the period above mentioned, a remarkable change has taken place. The long parentheſis, which ſo frequently occurs in the older writers, to the great embarraſſment and perplexity of their meaning, has fallen much into diſuſe. It has been obſerved, that it is no where to be found in the writings of Johnſon. Authors have ſhortened their ſentences, which, in ſome of the beſt writers of the ſeventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, were extended to an almoſt immeaſurable length[b]; and they have ſtated their ſenti-

[b] See the firſt ſentence of Clarendon's Hiſtory of the Rebellion. The ſecond ſentence of Milton's Reformation in England runs out to 29½ folio lines, divided into nearly as many members; the firſt ſentence of his ſecond Book againſt Prelacy is 18½ lines folio in length. There is a ſentence

ments to much more advantage by ſeparating their ideas from each other, and expreſſing them with greater diſtinctneſs: whether this circumſtance may not argue a want of fertility of ideas and a tardineſs of conception, it is not our buſineſs to inquire. The cuſtom of writing in ſhort ſentences muſt be allowed to detract from roundneſs of period, and dignity of compoſition: but it certainly contributes ſo materially to perſpicuity, that it cannot fail to make every reader ſatisfied with the change.

Converſation and Pronunciation.

Our remarks have been generally applied to the Engliſh, conſidered as a written language: but books have a much more extenſive uſe, than merely to regulate the practice of writers; for they are calculated to correct the errors of converſation, and communicate both accuracy and purity to ſocial intercourſe. There will always be leſs variation of ſpeech prevailing among the natives of different provinces, and leſs vulgarity of dialect, in proportion as well written books are circulated and peruſed. But the ſtandard of the language

ſentence in Bolingbroke's Philoſophy, Eſſay i. ſect. 2. which is 22 lines octavo in length; and there is another in Swift's Letter to the Lord Treaſurer nearly as long.

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ought always to continue the ſame; it ſhould conſiſt in a compliance with general rules, and the practice of the poliſhed ranks of ſociety. Such regulations at once reſcue it from the caprice of individuals, and eſtabliſh a barrier againſt the incroachments of commercial idiom, profeſſional phraſeology, vulgarity, ignorance, and pedantry.

The correct ſpeaker rejects local and provincial forms of expreſſion, for thoſe which are general. He converſes neither in the dialect of Somerſetſhire, nor of Norfolk; but in that elegant phraſeology which has received the ſanction of the beſt company. He neither countenances by his approbation, nor authoriſes by his practice, new-faſhioned phraſes, or upſtart words, that have only novelty to recommend them; whether they are introduced by the great or the vulgar, the learned or the ignorant. Upon theſe occaſions a good taſte will prove the ſureſt guide. He conforms to idiom and analogy; and at the ſame time that he confeſſes his obligations to learned men for their labours in attempting to reduce his native language to a fixed ſtandard, he forgets not, what it is of great importance for an Engliſhman ever to recollect, that the " pure wells of Engliſh

unde-

undefiled" are ſupplied by a Teutonic ſource; and that the genius of the Britiſh language, like the ſpirit of the Britiſh people, diſdains to be encroached upon by arbitrary and foreign innovations[c].

Thoſe who write only for the preſent times labour to adorn their ſtyle with modiſh phraſes. A popular ſpeaker, and particularly a member of the Houſe of Commons, enjoys a kind of privilege to coin as many words as he pleaſes; and they no ſooner receive the ſanction of his authority, than they intrude upon us from every quarter in letters, plays, and periodical publications. But ſuch words reſemble certain inſects that are ſeen to flutter for a day, and afterward intirely diſappear. The people, ever fickle and fond of novelty, are as prompt to reject as they were to adopt

[c] Quintilian defines and fixes the true ſtandard of converſation with his accuſtomed judgment. "In loquendo non ſi quid vitioſe multis inſederit, pro regula ſermonis accipiendum erit.—Ergo conſuetudinem ſermonis vocabo conſenſum eruditorum; ſicut vivendi conſenſum bonorum." Lib. i. c. 4.

In words, as faſhions, the ſame rule will hold,
Alike fantaſtic, if too new or old.
Be not the firſt by whom the new are try'd,
Nor yet the laſt to lay the old aſide.

Pope on Criticiſm.

them; and they ſeldom long ſurvive the occaſion that gave them birth.

We cannot forbear to join in the complaint which foreigners make, that our pronunciation is much at variance with our orthography. The practice of the court and the ſtage has multiplied theſe variations, which have been too eagerly adopted in the higher ranks of ſociety. Agreeableneſs of ſound is often aſſigned as a reaſon for this practice; but in many words two conſonants are pronounced inſtead of one, which ſurely cannot give additional melody to a word[d]: the irregularities in our language are ſufficiently numerous, without making this addition to them. Fortunately indeed, the people at large are not influenced by the changes of faſhion, but long adhere to eſtabliſhed and ancient uſages; and therefore among them we muſt look for that uniformity of writing and ſpeaking, which perſons in the higher ranks of life ſacrifice to caprice, and a love of diſtinction and novelty.

We here conclude our obſervations on a language, which by the commerce, the con-

[d] As in the modiſh pronunciation of nature, ſuperior, ſugar, education, inſuperable, &c. &c.

queſts,

queſts, and the colonies of the Engliſh, is at preſent well known in every quarter of the globe. Its reputation ſeems to increaſe more and more, as it is of late years become the favourite ſtudy of all thoſe foreigners who wiſh to complete a liberal education. And indeed it may be ſaid, without partiality or exaggeration, to merit their attention; ſince it contains ſome of the choiceſt treaſures of the human mind, and is the vehicle of more intellectual vigour, more energy of thought, more depth of erudition, warmth of imagination, and reſearch of philoſophy, than any other nation can boaſt. For this is the language which has conveyed to the world the ſublime productions of Shakeſpeare and Milton; (with pride, with reverence, and with gratitude, I repeat their names;) the philoſophical reſearches of Boyle, the profound diſquiſitions of Locke, the elegant Eſſays of Addiſon, the poliſhed numbers of Dryden and Pope, the nervous eloquence and ſolid arguments of Barrow, Tillotſon, and Clarke; the entertaining novels of Fielding and Richardſon, and the hiſtorical excellence of Clarendon, Robertſon, and Henry. Theſe eminent writers have ſecured its ſtability, as well as extended its renown; and, as long as literary curioſity retains its hold upon the mind, ſtudents

dents of all countries will be inſpired with ardour to enjoy ſuch invaluable productions of genius in their original dreſs.

The prevalence and flouriſhing ſtate of our language depend not ſolely upon the inhabitants of the Britiſh dominions in Europe. In many of the iſlands of the Weſt Indies it is cultivated with diligence. Our extenſive and ſtill increaſing ſettlements in the Eaſt Indies promiſe to inſure its preſervation, and open a ſpacious field for its wider diffuſion. The United States of America cannot fail to perpetuate the language of their parent country; and the ſpirit of literary and ſcientific inveſtigation, which is riſing among them, will conduce to this end; ſince it will encourage the ſtudy of thoſe celebrated productions, from which the Americans have gained their knowledge of the beſt ſyſtem of legiſlation, and their moſt correct principles of liberty.

When we conſider the uncertainty and the fluctuating nature of all human affairs, and particularly the great mutability of language, we cannot help giving way to the melancholy reflexion, that the time may arrive, when the Engliſh, which at preſent ap-

pears ſo durable and permanent, as the ſtandard of converſation and writing, will become obſolete. The caprices of faſhion, the wide extent of our commerce, the general intercourſe with other nations, and more particularly the predominant influence of the French language, may produce great changes; and Hume and Johnſon, Pope and Goldſmith, may become what Speed and Aſcham, Chaucer and Phaer, are at preſent. For the honour, however, both of true taſte and the good ſenſe of mankind, we may preſume to expect, that the volumes of Engliſh literature and ſcience will not ſink into oblivion; that the language, in which they are written, embalmed in the choiceſt productions, and ranked with the claſſical tongues of Greece and Rome, will be reſerved for general improvement and pleaſure, and will convey the works of genius, learning, and philoſophy, to the moſt diſtant ages and generations.

CHAPTER IV.

The Latin Language.

A KNOWLEDGE of this language introduces us to many of thofe works, which are defervedly claffed among the moft elegant productions of the human mind, and are confidered as fome of the moft correct models of literary excellence. If we eftimate its comparative value and importance, it claims a place immediately after our own tongue; as not only the Roman writers have made it the vehicle of their genius, but it has been enriched, fince the revival of learning, with the productions of many eminent authors of modern times.

The utility of an acquaintance with this language will be more immediately apparent, if we confider how much our own is indebted to it for many of the terms of art and fcience, as well as for moft of our polyfyllables. Without the aid, indeed, of the words which it fupplies, it is difficult to write, or fpeak even a fentence of elegant Englifh; fo that when a fcholar is engaged in ftudying the Latin,

Latin, he is in fact making himſelf a more perfect maſter of his own language. It is equally uſeful to him, if he wiſhes to acquire the French, the Italian, and the Spaniſh, as it conſtitutes ſo material a part of thoſe elegant tongues. It is the prolific mother of many children; and whatever difference may prevail among them with reſpect to the various countries, in which they are ſettled, or the foreign alliances they have formed, they diſcover the parent from which they ſprung, by the moſt ſtriking ſimilarity of features.

Conſidered with reſpect to its origin, the Latin language derived many words from the Etruſcans and Sabines: it is however, for the moſt part, a very ancient branch of the Greek, and is chiefly formed from the Doric and Eolic dialects [a]. A colony of Arcadians under Enotrus

[a] The Eolic and Doric dialects may be very clearly traced in the Latin language. From the Eolic genitive in αων were formed the feminine plurals in *arum*. From the Doric α pro η are derived the words of the firſt declenſion. From the Doric third perſon plural in οντι for ουσι was formed the Latin third perſon plural in *unt*; from the genitive in οιο was formed the Latin genitive in *i*.

"Muretus non dubitavit dicere, eos qui Græci ſermonis expertes ſint, ne Latina quidem ſcripta penitus percipere poſſe." Prolegom. ad Etymologicum Lennep, p. 6.

"Ipſe

Enotrus are ſaid to have introduced it into Italy many centuries before the Trojan war. As it was ſeparated from the mother tongue at ſo very early a period, it was deficient in that melody and ſweetneſs which the other dialects acquired, when Greek afterwards reached its greateſt perfection.

Not only innumerable terms, but the ancient forms of the Roman letters, prove the origin of the language to have been Grecian. From the ſame ſource it derived progreſſive improvements. The firſt Latin poets, Pacuvius, Ennius, and Plautus, modelled their works upon the Grecian plan, as is particularly evident from their frequent uſe of compound words. As ſoon as the art of public ſpeaking began to be cultivated in Rome, the Greek language, which contained ſome of the richeſt treaſures of eloquence, became a favourite object of purſuit; and Athens was frequented by the Roman youth of fortune and family, as the beſt and moſt approved

"Ipſe vir ſummus Hemſterhuſius ſeſe in Latinis intelligendis ſic a Græcis adjuvari ſentiebat, ut interdum negaret, poetas eos qui ſe totos ad Græcorum imitationem contuliſſent, nominatim Propertium et Horatium, Græce imperitis valde placere poſſe." Prolegom. ad Etymologicum Lennep, p. 6.

 ſeminary

ſeminary of education. The attention which was paid to the productions of Greece by the Romans, when advancing towards refinement, ſufficiently marks the high eſtimation, in which their literature was held. Cato, the celebrated Cenſor, at a late period of life learned the elements of that language; and Pompey, as a mark of diſtinguiſhed reſpect to a Greek philoſopher, lowered his conſular faſces to Poſidonius the ſophiſt, whom he viſited in his ſchool at Rhodes. Greece was to Rome, what Egypt had been in more remote times to Greece, the fruitful parent of her literature and arts.

The Latin yields the ſuperiority to the Greek language, not only with regard to melody of ſound, but compaſs of expreſſion. It has no dual number, and has only one tenſe to denote the paſt perfect, which does not expreſs whether the action ſtill continues to be carried on: but the Greek can expreſs this equally by the preterperfect, and the aoriſt. The Latin has not a paſt participle active: whereas in Greek there are two, namely, the participle of the aoriſt, and the preterperfect. It wants likewiſe a preſent participle paſſive, which reduces writers to great inconvenience, and occaſions much aukwardneſs

aukwardneſs and uncertainty of expreſſion. It is deficient in a middle voice, and an optative mood, marked by a pecular termination, to diſtinguiſh it from the ſubjunctive: and what is of much greater importance, it has no article, a mode of expreſſion, which the modern languages of Europe poſſeſs, however inferior they are to the ancient tongues in other reſpects. This defect diminiſhes the dignity and emphaſis of names, and produces great confuſion of ſenſe, whenever two nouns are joined together by the verb ſubſtantive. Many words likewiſe denote ſo many different ideas, that their peculiar ſignification can be determined only by a careful attention to the context.

In the different inflections and terminations of words, as well as in the delicate and pleaſing denominations of objects by diminutives, Greek and Latin bear a ſtrong reſemblance to each other. The Latin poſſeſſes the advantage of compound words, but in a degree that will hardly admit of compariſon with the Greek. It is equally happy in denoting by particular verbs the frequent repetition or commencement of actions; and it is more accurate in its power of expreſſing certain modifications of time by gerunds and ſupines.

 With

With reſpect to compoſition, the productions of the Latin claſſics are ranked next in order of excellence to thoſe of the Greek. The poliſhed writers of Rome, diſdaining to follow the plain and inartificial manner of their older authors, imitated the varied pauſes and harmonious flow of Grecian periods. The choice of arrangement allowed them by the happy genius of their language, produced a remarkable difference between the familiar and the formal ſtyle. In his Epiſtles and Satires, Horace is careleſs and eaſy: in his Odes he indulges in more flowing and more complex periods. Cicero in his Letters is looſe and negligent; but in many of his Orations and philoſophical works, he is more exact in his conſtruction of words, and more ſtudiouſly correct.

In one kind of arrangement, the Romans were inferior to their great maſters, as they ſo frequently terminated their ſentences with verbs. This practice ſometimes runs through ſeveral ſentences together, with no ſmall degree of tireſome uniformity; as is evident from many paſſages in the Hiſtory of Livy, the Orations of Cicero, and the Commentaries of Cæſar. In defence however of this cuſtom it may be remarked, that as the

action expreſſed by the verb is frequently the moſt emphatic idea, it might be thought moſt conſiſtent with the genius of their compoſition, to place it at the cloſe of the period, for the purpoſe of more effectually ſecuring the attention of the hearer or reader.

From conſidering the beauties of compoſition ſo conſpicuous in the works of the claſſic authors, we muſt be ſenſible of the unfavourable light, in which they appear when viewed through the medium of tranſlations. They are expoſed to the vanity, the negligence, or the ignorance of the tranſlator; and are liable to be injured by his faſtidiouſneſs, or his want of taſte. The ſenſe of an original work may be debaſed by ſervile fidelity of verſion, or enervated by unreſtrained freedom of expreſſion; it may be dilated into a commentary, or compreſſed into an abridgment. The defects and difficulties of the tranſlator are increaſed by the inferiority of his language. The claſſics are characteriſed by a native elegance and dignity of thought, a peculiar preciſion of ſtyle, a copious flow of period, a regular conſtruction of ſentence: in addition to which, their poetical works are adorned with the harmony of numbers, and the various beauties of metrical verſification. The

modern

modern languages poſſeſs ſome of theſe beauties in an inferior degree, and of others they are totally deſtitute. If therefore the flowers of eloquence and poetry, which bloom in the fields of Cicero and Virgil, be tranſplanted into a leſs genial ſoil, and a colder climate, their vigour declines, and they loſe the brightneſs of their colours, and the richneſs of their fragrance[b].

By thus ſtating the diſadvantages, to which the works of the ancients are expoſed by tranſlations, it is not intended to depreciate the merits of all ſuch works. There are ſome, which deſerve the attention of the claſſical ſtudent, and many which may diminiſh the concern which the mere Engliſh reader may feel for the want of a learned education. The beſt are thoſe, of which the

[b] My own practice may afford an apt illuſtration of the inferiority of a tranſlation to an original: for I have repreſented in feeble Engliſh the juſt and beautiful obſervations which Gravina, an eminent Italian writer, has conveyed in ſtrong and Ciceronian periods. Opuſc. p. 183.

Ce qu'il y a de plus délicat dans les penſées, et dans les expreſſions des auteurs, qui ont écrit avec beaucoup de juſteſſe, ſe perd quand on les veut mettre dans une autre langue: à-peu-près comme ces eſſences exquiſes, dont le parfum ſubtile s'évapore quand on les verſe d'un vaſe dans un autre. Bouhours, Penſées Ingénieuſes, p. 195.

Italian

Italian language may ſo juſtly boaſt. And the literature of our own country derives no inconſiderable addition to its treaſures from the Pindar of Weſt, the Ariſtotle of Tyrwhitt, the Demoſthenes of Leland, the Letters of Cicero and Pliny by Melmoth, the Tacitus of Murphy, the Æſchylus, Euripides, and Sophocles of Potter, the Iliad of Pope, the Virgil of Pitt and Warton, and the Lucan of Rowe.

The remaining fragments of the annals of the Pontiffs, and the laws of the Twelve Tables, are ſufficient to prove the rude and imperfect ſtate of the Latin language, during the early times of the republic. Two of the firſt hiſtorians of Rome compoſed their works in Greek; and even Brutus, the contemporary of Cicero, wrote his epiſtles in the ſame language. That great orator wrote a Greek commentary on his own conſulſhip; and his friend Atticus produced a ſimilar work upon the ſame ſubject. The Latin was not only for a conſiderable time an unpoliſhed, but a defective language. Its poverty of expreſſion was a ſubject of complaint, as ſoon as it began to be regularly ſtudied. Cicero and Lucretius were ſenſible of the want of terms

adapted

adapted to philoſophical topics. Even the names of phyſics, dialectics, and rhetoric, were unknown before the former of theſe authors introduced them into his works; and the latter laments that his native tongue was not calculated to communicate with adequate ſtrength and copiouſneſs of expreſſion the wonders and the beauties of Grecian philoſophy. Its defects were not ſo great, when applied to ſubjects more congenial to the manners of the Romans. From their conſtant occupations in domeſtic and foreign wars for many centuries, their language took a deep and peculiar tincture, and the marks of it were evident from many modes of expreſſion. *Virtus*, for inſtance, denotes virtue as well as courage; *Exercitus*, which ſignifies an army, conveys likewiſe in its original import the idea of any kind of corporeal exerciſe; *Imperator*, originally appropriated to a general, was afterwards applied to the ſupreme civil magiſtrate of the empire; and the term *Hoſtis*, which was employed in contradiſtinction to a native of Rome, in its primary meaning, denoted a ſtranger[c]. The

[c] *Hoſtis* enim apud majores noſtros is dicebatur, quem nunc *peregrinum* dicimus. Indicant 12 tabulæ aut ſtatus dies cum hoſte, &c. Cicero de Officiis, lib i. c. 12.

Roman gentlemen were denominated *Equites*, which had a reference to the military ſervice performed on horſeback by perſons of their quality, in the early ages of the common-wealth, when a ſoldier and a citizen were the ſame.

Latin Claſſics.

It might naturally enough be ſuppoſed, on comparing the Comedies of Plautus with thoſe of Terence, and the Poems of Lucretius with Virgil, that they had lived at the diſtance of ſeveral centuries from each other; and yet they were in reality ſeparated by no long interval of time. Plautus flouriſhed about thirty years before Terence, and Virgil about fifty after Lucretius. The rapid progreſs of the Latin tongue to perfection will appear leſs extraordinary, when we remark the labour beſtowed upon its cultivation by perſons as eminent for their taſte and learning, as for their rank and talents. Scipio Africanus was the aſſiſtant of Terence in his comic productions; and Cicero and Cæſar promoted the improvement and refinement of their language, not only by examples of correctneſs in

Virtus is probably derived from vis or vir, as Αρετη is from Αρης. "Virtute ſemper prævalet ſapientia." Phædrus.

their

their inimitable writings, but by composing treatises of grammar.

All the Latin authors, who were remarkable for purity and elegance of diction, flourished within the space of a century and a half, viz. from the time of Scipio Africanus to the death of Augustus. During that auspicious period, it was evident, with what great success the Roman language could be adapted to every species of composition. The prose writer expanded his ideas in flowing periods, or, condensed them in concise and luminous expressions. The poet adapted the various kinds of metre to the melodious notes of the lyre, or, aided by the fancied inspiration of the epic muse, poured forth the more regular and harmonious numbers of heroic song.

The golden age of Latin composition commenced with Terence, who introduced the characters of his elegant comedies, conversing in the most terse and perspicuous language. Lucretius gave to the Epicurean philosophy the wild but captivating charms of a vigorous fancy, and nervous expression. His versification is sometimes rough and unpolished, and sometimes rises into so much grace and smooth-

ſmoothneſs as to reſemble the hexameters of Virgil[d]. The Mantuan ſhepherds were ſoon after inſtructed by that moſt eminent of Latin poets to converſe in refined dialogues. His Georgics received the higheſt poliſh of diction, and his Epic Muſe aſtoniſhed her hearers by correctneſs of compoſition, and harmony of ſong. Whenever Virgil indulges the genuine feelings of nature, and deſcribes

[d] The principal inſtances that occur to confirm my aſſertion are, the beautiful exordium of his poem, " Œneadum Gênetrix," and his highly fanciful account of the origin of muſic from the ſinging of birds, " At liquidas avium voces, &c." lib. v. l. 1377. There is a wild ſublimity and originality in the poem of Lucretius, which is deeply ſtriking. The philoſophy of Epicurus and Empedocles, which he adopted, was as dreary as the language in which Lucretius has clothed their principles is energetic, and his illuſtrations juſt. His deſcriptions of nature are enchanting; but his doctrine of atoms, which adhere to each other by chance, is too abſurd to require a ſerious refutation. As a true poet it was in vain for him to affect the character of an Atheiſt; he felt the neceſſity of ſome θεος απο μηχανης: he has therefore with a diſplay of the moſt elegant imagery, and with a grace and majeſty ſuitable to the occaſion, opened his poem with an addreſs to the Goddeſs of Love, aſcribed to her the creation of the world, inveſted her with the attributes of power and goodneſs, and aſſigned to her the controul of all human affairs. He felt that there was nothing in the opinions of Anaximander, or of Democritus, to intereſt mankind, without preſenting to them ſome diſplay of the agency of a Divinity.

the effects of the tender paſſions, he is peculiarly delicate, captivating, and pathetic; but he ſeldom aſcends to ſublimity of thought, without having the great father of Grecian poetry in view. Cicero, the pride of Rome, and the model of true eloquence, adapted his ſtyle to every ſpecies of proſe compoſition: in his letters he was eaſy and familiar; upon ſubjects of philoſophy and oratory he enriched the diction, while he enlightened the minds of his countrymen; in the character of a public ſpeaker, he gave beauty, pathos, and energy, to his native language; he adorned it with the brighteſt ornaments, and infuſed into it the united powers of extenſive learning and eminent talents. His copious and exuberant ſtyle reſembles the large and flowing garments, that were thrown by the ſculptor over the ſtatues of the gods, and which, far from preſſing and confining their bodies, gave free exerciſe to their limbs, and ſuperior gracefulneſs to their motion[e]. Cor-

[e] Velleius Paterculus in his encomium on Cicero defines with elegance and preciſion the limits of the golden age of Latinity. "Oratio et vis forenſis perfectumque proſæ eloquentiæ decus ita ſub principe operis ſui erupit Tullio, ut delectari ante eum pauciſſimis; admirari vero neminem poſſis, niſi ab illo viſum; aut qui illum viderit." Lib. i. c. 17.

Gravina caught the ſame ſpirit of elegant obſervation, when

nelius Nepos, the friend of Cicero, has ſhewn his congenial taſte by the eaſy and unaffected ſtyle, in which he has recorded the lives of eminent perſons of his own country and of Greece. The Commentaries of Cæſar are valuable no leſs for accuracy and livelineſs of narrative, than for the pureſt ſimplicity of diction. Horace ſuited the colours of his compoſition to the nature of his ſubjects: in his Epiſtles and Satires he is humorous without coarſeneſs, and cenſorious without aſperity; and in his Odes he is conciſe, ſplendid, and majeſtic[f]. The eaſy and licentious Ovid,

when he remarked, "Mirum eſſet ſi hunc ſcriptorem non haberem eximium, quo nemo eſt auctior in eloquentia Latina, et in omni ſermonis elegantia locupletior, nemo ſplendidior, nemo uberior, nemo in omni eruditione celebrior; nemo denique de quo cum tot laudes ſint diffuſæ, minus tamen pro illius dignitate ſit dictum," p. 180. De Lat. Linguâ.

[f] In his Odes, Horace ſeems to unite the eaſe of Anacreon to the ſublimity of Pindar. He is more perſpicuous, and certainly has much more variety of ſubject, than the Bard of Thebes. His "Paſtor cum traheret," his Speeches of Juno and of Regulus, and "Quem tu Melpomene ſemel," are effuſions of matchleſs beauty. If we obſerve his excellent good ſenſe, the preciſion of his ſtyle, the harmony of his numbers, and the verſatility of his genius; if we recollect that the ſame man has written Odes which may diſpute the palm with the Bards of Greece, Satires full of pleaſing raillery, Epiſtles which contain the beſt lectures on men and manners, and an Art of Poetry which is the code of criticiſm and re-

the terſe Catullus, the plaintive Tibullus, poured forth their poetical effuſions in a full and clear ſtream of deſcription. Phædrus, by his neat and expreſſive verſification of the Fables of Æſop, proved that Iambic meaſure was ſuited to the genius of the Latin tongue. Livy gave the moſt finiſhed graces to hiſtoric compoſition; and it is difficult to determine whether he moſt excels in the clearneſs of his deſcriptions, or the appropriate eloquence of his ſpeeches. Learning has ſuſtained an irreparable injury in the loſs of the concluding, and of courſe the moſt intereſting part of his work, which related to a period, that admitted the moſt advantageous diſplay of his talents for hiſtorical painting, his zeal for truth, and his ardour in the cauſe of liberty[g].

refined taſte; it will ſurely be admitted that he poſſeſſed the moſt ample powers to inſtruct and to delight mankind. Perhaps there is no claſſic, who pleaſes us more, or pleaſes us ſo long. He has charms for perſons of every age: by the young he is read with delight, and by the old he is rarely forgot. See La Harpe's Lectures at the Lyceum, Warton's Eſſay on Pope, vol. i. p. 397, and the Britiſh Critic for January 1794.

[g] "Illi Quintilianus lacteam ubertatem tribuit," eumque Herodoto comparatum dicit, "cum in narrando miræ jucunditatis, clariſſimique candoris; tum in concionibus ſupra quam narrari poteſt eloquentem; ita dicuntur omnia cum rebus tum perſonis accommodata: ſed affectus quidem, præcipue eos qui ſunt dulciores, ut parciſſime dicam, nemo hiſtoricorum commendavit magis;" ideoque, lib. ii. c. v.

Livium

During this ſplendid period, ſo glorious to Rome and to human nature, the affected phraſeology of Salluſt was an omen of the approaching decline of claſſical purity.

The high reputation acquired by theſe writers, whoſe beauties have been the favourite theme of praiſe in every poliſhed age, reſults from combining in their works the genuine characteriſtics of elegant compoſition.

However they may differ in the direction of their talents, the nature of their ſubjects, and the ſtyle of their productions, there is ſtill a congeniality of taſte conſpicuous in all their writings, which are marked by ſuch perſpicuity and elegance of language, and animated by ſuch propriety and vigour of thought, as can only be fully aſcertained by frequent peruſal and attentive obſervation; and the extreme difficulty of reaching the ſtandard of excellence, which they have erected, is ſufficiently manifeſt from the ſmall number of modern writers, who have imitated them with any conſiderable degree of ſucceſs [h].

Livium ab adoleſcentibus magis, quam Salluſtium legendum eſſe judicat. Walchii Hiſt. p. 50. Quint. lib. x. c. i.

[h] Strictior Calvus, numeroſior Aſinius, ſplendidior Cæſar,

To follow the ſteps of Grecian authors was the general practice of the Romans. Each of them found ſome predeceſſor, who had led the way to the fields of invention, and was therefore adopted as the inſtructor of his inexperienced genius, and his guide to eminence and fame. The aſſiſtance which Homer, Heſiod, and the tragedians afforded to Virgil, was ſimilar to that which in other branches of compoſition Pindar, Archilochus, Alcæus, and Sappho gave to Horace; Menander to Terence; Pla-

ſar, amarior Cælius, gravior Brutus, vehementior et plenior et valentior Cicero, omnes tamen eandem ſanitatem eloquentiæ ferunt, ut ſi omnium pariter libros in manum ſumſeris, ſcias, quamvis in diverſis ingeniis, eſſe quandam judicii et voluntatis ſimilitudinem et cognationem. Dialog. de Oratoribus, c. xxv.

The engaging gracefulneſs of his Sulpicia, which Tibullus ſo inimitably deſcribes, apparent in all her actions, her dreſs and whole demeanour, correſpond with the native beauty of the claſſics, diverſified in ſo many forms, and under every appearance inexpreſſibly beautiful and captivating.

Illam quicquid agit, quoquo veſtigia movet
  Componit furtim, ſubſequiturque decor;
Seu ſolvit crines; fuſis decet eſſe capillis;
  Seu comſit, comtis eſt veneranda comis.
Urit, ſeu Tyria voluit procedere palla,
  Urit, ſeu nivea candida veſte venit.
Talis in æterno felix Vertumnus Olympo,
  Mille habet ornatos, mille decenter habet.

Tibull. lib. iv. carm. 2. ed. Heyne.

to

'to and Demosthenes to Cicero; Polybius to Livy; and Thucydides to Sallust. As a copy must from its own nature be inferior to the original, which it imitates, they have all fallen short in point of originality and fervour of composition. The poets are more particularly remarkable for enriching themselves with foreign treasures; and as so many of their obligations to the Greeks, whose works are still extant, are discovered, it is perhaps the less unfair for us to conclude, that the Romans were very deeply indebted to those, whose works have not escaped the ravages of time. The lost comedies of Menander and Philemon, and the lost books of Polybius, if they could be recovered, would probably make such discoveries as considerably to abate the praise usually bestowed upon Terence and Livy. The want of originality was in some measure, although imperfectly, supplied by judgment and taste. The rules of criticism were studied when various kinds of literature were cultivated at Rome; for Horace wrote his Art of Poetry nearly at the same time Virgil was composing his Eneid. A blind attachment to their great masters fettered the minds of the Romans, and rendered them close and servile followers, rather than daring and free adventurers. If however

we conſider the manners of the nation, their dignity of character, their undaunted ſpirit, their love of freedom, and the great improvements made upon other foreign inventions; particularly upon the arts of government and war, we may fairly pronounce, that they would have approached much nearer to perfection, and that they would have taken a nobler and a ſublimer flight, if they had truſted leſs to the genius of Greece, and more to the enthuſiaſm of nature.

Inferior as the Romans confeſſedly were to the Greeks in delicacy, harmony, and copiouſneſs, they may ſurely riſk a conteſt with them for the prize of vigour and majeſty of compoſition. Would it be too hazardous to reſt their pretenſions to theſe qualities upon the firſt Oration of Cicero againſt Catiline, the ſpeech of Cæſar in Salluſt, many of the ſpeeches in Livy and Tacitus, particularly thoſe of Hannibal, Scipio Africanus, and Galgacus? While this competition is propoſed, the ſpeeches of Demoſthenes and of Pericles, the dignified and truly heroic reply of Polyxena in the Hecuba of Euripides, are not forgotten, and, it is hoped, are not undervalued. The Latin language ſeems to have been formed for a bold, powerful, and war-

like

like people, and therefore perfectly well accorded with the lofty sentiments and heroic spirit of the conquerors of the world.

Decline of the Language.

The decay of taste, which extended its influence to the productions of the fine arts, prevailed likewise in works of literature. In the writers who flourished after the Augustan age this circumstance is remarkable, although we should be deficient in justice not to acknowledge that they possess a considerable share of beautiful imagery, lively description, and just observation, both in poetry and prose. Seneca degraded the dignity of his moral treatises by sentences too pointed, and ornaments of rhetoric too numerous and studied[i]; and Pliny gave too laboured and epigrammatic a turn to Epistles, which equally attest the incorrectness of his taste, and the benevolence of his disposition. Lucan indulged the extravagance and wildness of his genius in puerile flights of fancy; and Tacitus fettered the powers of his judgment, and obscured the brightness of his imagination, by elaborate brevity, and dark and distant allusion[k]. Such

[i] See Quintilian book x. ad finem, for a just character of Seneca.

[k] The character given by Pliny to Timanthes may be justly

affectation was in vain ſubſtituted for the charms of nature and ſimplicity. So fruitleſs is the attempt to ſupply, by gaudy ornaments of dreſs, and artificial beauty of complexion, the want of genuine charms, and the native bloom of youth.

Quintilian, in an incomparable work, calculated to form the mind, and complete the education of a Roman orator, and abounding with the pureſt principles of judgment, and the choiceſt treaſures of learning and expe-

juſtly applied to Tacitus: "In omnibus ejus operibus intelligitur plus ſemper quam pingitur; et cum ars ſumma ſit, ingenium tamen ultra artem eſt." Lib. xxxv. c. 10.

"A man who could join the brilliant of wit, and conciſe ſententiouſneſs peculiar to that age, with the truth and gravity of better times, and the deep reflection, and good ſenſe of the beſt moderns, cannot chooſe but have ſomething to ſtrike you. Yet what I admire in him above all this, is his deteſtation of tyranny, and the high ſpirit of liberty, that every now and then breaks out, as it were, whether he would or no. I remember a ſentence in his Agricola, that (conciſe as it is) I always admired, for ſaying much in a little compaſs. He ſpeaks of Domitian, who upon ſeeing the laſt will of Agricola, where he had made him coheir with his wife and daughter, 'Satis conſtabat lætatum eum velut honore judicioque; tam cæca et corrupta mens aſſiduis adulationibus erat, ut neſciret a bono patre non ſcribi hæredem, niſi malum principem." Gray's Letters to Weſt.

rience,

rience, endeavoured to direct the attention of his countrymen to the ancient models of compoſition[1]. But the weeds of a bad taſte were too deeply and too widely ſown to be eradicated, even by his diligent and ſkilful hand; and this degeneracy in the productions of literature, with a few exceptions, kept a regular pace with the depravity of manners, which prevailed during the ſucceeding times of the lower empire.

"Were we to divide the whole ſpace from Auguſtus to Conſtantine into two equal periods of time, we could not obſerve without

[1] It may be obſerved of Quintilian and of Sir Joſhua Reynolds, that their reſpective works are not merely calculated for the improvement of youth in eloquence and painting, but that they contain the principles of true taſte, which are applicable to the fine arts and to literature in general, aided by great force of expreſſion, and adorned with great elegance of fancy. The conciſe review of Greek and Latin authors by Quintilian is perhaps ſcarcely to be paralleled for correctneſs of judgment. He enlarges with peculiar pleaſure upon the Orations of Cicero, of whom he was an enthuſiaſtic admirer; and gives ſuch an exquiſite character of the Comedies of Menander, as to increaſe our regret for their irreparable loſs. His ſtrictures upon Seneca prove that in the decline of literature, when the works of that author were moſt popular, the taſte of Quintilian was neither vitiated by falſe refinement, nor perverted by the prejudices of his contemporaries.

ſurpriſe

ſurpriſe the difference in their reſpective degeneracy and deterioration. The writers in the firſt diviſion rank, it is true, far below *their* predeceſſors of the Auguſtan ſchool: but who will compare Calphurnius and Nemeſianus with Lucan and Statius? Tacitus muſt not be degraded by a compariſon with any hiſtorian of the latter interval; and Suetonius himſelf riſes far above the level of Spartianus, Capitolinus, and Lampridius.

"St. Ambroſe, St. Auguſtin, and Pope Leo the Firſt, were undoubtedly men of powerful minds and extenſive learning; but they exhibit ſtrong proofs of the corruption of language. Nor can a more favourable judgment be paſſed upon the more lineally deſcended claſſics, the partizans of Homeric deities and pagan mythology. Servius was nothing more than a pains-taking grammarian; Macrobius, a profeſſed ſcholar and critic, was unable to uſe his own language, or exemplify his own rules; and Symmachus, a courtier, and a man of diſtinguiſhed abilities, has not the leaſt claim to elegance of diction, or profundity of thought. Claudian himſelf, a foreigner, ſeems born to reſcue the age from general contempt, and in ſpirit and harmony ranks high among the Roman poets. As to

Auſonius,

Ausonius, Sidonius Apollinaris, and the galaxy of transalpine scholars, which sheds a faint gleam on the last stage of Roman literature, they obtain by their number a distinction they could not claim by their merits [m]."

The great cause of the corruption of the Latin language, which gradually took place after the reign of Augustus, proceeded from the number of strangers, Goths, Alans, Huns, and Gauls, who resorted to Rome from the provinces of Italy and other parts of the empire, and intermixed foreign words, and new combinations of speech, with the original Latin. It is probable indeed, that as the classical language of Rome flourished for so short a period, it had never taken deep root in the provinces of Italy, where the inhabitants of Apulia, Tuscany, Umbria, Magna Græcia, Lombardy, and Liguria, were all distinguished by their peculiar dialects. The prevalence of Greek likewise had no inconsiderable influence in shortening the continuance of pure Latin, as the former had long been fashionable among the polished Romans; and when the seat of empire was removed, it entirely superseded the use of the latter in the court of Constantinople.

[m] Introduction to the Literary History, &c. p. 20.

Still

The accurate obſerver of the Latin tongue may trace its progreſs through the ſucceſſive ſtages of infancy, childhood, manhood, and old age. The infancy marks the time, when Saturn and Janus reigned over the moſt ancient inhabitants of Italy, and the Salii pronounced in honour of the gods their wild and unpoliſhed verſes. The childhood refers to the reign of the kings, and the eſtabliſhment of the laws of the twelve tables. Its manhood denotes the decline of the republic, and the riſe of the empire, when poetry was cultivated by Terence, Lucretius, Virgil, and Horace; eloquence by Hortenſius and Cicero; and hiſtory by Cornelius Nepos and Livy. Its old age characteriſes the reigns of the latter emperors, when falſe refinement baniſhed the taſte of the Auguſtan age, and the language became debaſed and corrupted.

State of the Language in modern times.

The extenſive conqueſts of the Romans, their conſtant intercourſe with other nations, and powerful influence over them, promoted the wide diffuſion of their language. The general eſtabliſhment of their laws, and the cuſtom of pleading in the courts of juſtice in no other language, laid the natives of many countries under the neceſſity of making its

ſtudy

ſtudy a part of their education. After the fall of the empire, the Germans, as ſoon as they directed their attention to literature, revived it by the ſtudy of the imperial law. Nor did the authority of the Papal See contribute leſs to preſerve and diſſeminate it; for it was the refined policy of the Conclave to oppoſe the learning of Rome as a barrier againſt the encroachments of the Greek church; ſo that the popularity of the Latin tongue bore no inconſiderable proportion to the extent of the pontifical power. To theſe cauſes may be attributed the prevalence of Latin, as a living language, upon the continent of Europe. It is at preſent ſpoken with fluency not only in France and Italy, by thoſe who have received a liberal education, but even by the peaſants in parts of Germany, Hungary, and Poland.

During the time that the Romans were maſters of the ancient world, and ever ſince the revival of learning, no language has had better pretenſions to the title of an univerſal language, than the Latin. So great has been its prevalence, that it has been cultivated by every enlightened nation; and there is no branch of learning, diſcovery of art, or ſyſtem of ſcience, and indeed ſcarcely any topic of liberal diſcuſſion or inquiry, which has not been indebted

debted to it for expreſſion, ornament, and illuſtration. This has always been the vehicle of communication between men of letters, and has enabled them to carry on a correſpondence with each other from the moſt diſtant places. Many celebrated authors have conſidered their native tongues, as either unpoliſhed in their phraſeology, or confined in their circulation; and have therefore had recourſe to the language of ancient Rome. The rays of ſcience and learning, that beam from many valuable productions, have been tranſmitted to the world through this clear and beautiful medium. This is the language in which were compoſed the invaluable productions of Eraſmus, Grotius, Puffendorf, Newton, Boerhaave, Bacon, and Gravina.

Even in the preſent age, every writer who wiſhes his works to deſcend to remote poſterity, muſt not venture to erect the monuments of his fame with the periſhable materials which modern languages ſupply, highly refined and firmly eſtabliſhed as they may appear. They are in a ſtate of conſtant fluctuation, and are ſubject to the caprices of faſhion and novelty. But the Latin is fixed and permanent. The phraſeology of Chaucer and Hollingſhed, of Malherbe and Rabelais, has long

long been obsolete, and in a state of old age; whilst that of Horace and Cicero, tried by the test of centuries, and consecrated by the respect of mankind, flourishes in perpetual youth. The language, that was once spoken by the conquerors of the world, is still used to express the dictates of gratitude, honour, and veneration. It is inscribed upon the public edifices; it distinguishes the monuments and the medals of every country in Europe; and transmits the remembrance of scholars, philosophers, patriots, and heroes, through the succeeding generations of mankind, in terms, which, with respect both to dignity and precision, no modern tongue can equal.

At the revival of learning, the opinion of scholars was by no means uniform, as to the proper standard of Latin composition. Longolius, Bembo, Paulus Manutius, and other writers of considerable note, were advocates for the exclusive imitation of Cicero, and endeavoured to gain the classic palm, by presenting in their works a servile copy of his style. The impropriety of this predilection was fully proved, and the right of the other classics to a due share of attention was ably maintained by Henry Stephens, Politian, and Erasmus. This controversy, carried on with so

ſo much warmth and ingenuity on both ſides, has long ceaſed: the great Roman Orator has been allowed to give the law of elegant writing to ſucceeding times; and this prerogative is founded upon the admirable perſpicuity, copiouſneſs, and richneſs of his diction. Virgil reigns with unrivalled ſway in the province of poetry, and his works have fixed the ſtandard of Latin verſification. Modern writers have riſen to fame in exact proportion as they have employed their diligence and taſte, in the imitation of theſe great maſters; but ſubject, however, to that defect, which neceſſarily attends the ſtudy of a foreign language, the expreſſions generally take a tincture from their native tongue; and in the Roman diſguiſe may frequently be diſcovered the features of the French, the German, and the Engliſh. Juſtice however reſtrains us from applying this obſervation with equal force to the Italians, as the derivation of their language, and their deſcent from a Roman origin, enable them to tread more exactly in the ſteps of their illuſtrious anceſtors.

To acquire ſuch claſſical knowledge, as to be able to write Latin with eaſe and elegance, can only be the work of him, who is equally a ſound ſcholar and a man of taſte. He

He muſt be ſenſible, that a good ſtyle does not conſiſt in a cloſe and ſervile imitation of any author in particular; but that it depends upon an intimate acquaintance with all the authors of the Auguſtan æra, or who have moſt cloſely conformed to the ſtandard of compoſition which was then erected. He muſt examine the nature of their works, develope the art and unravel the texture of their compoſitions[n]. His next care muſt be to adapt their expreſſions to his own ideas, in a manner ſuitable to the nature of his ſubject, whether it be theological, ſcientific, hiſtorical, or poetical; and, when he adorns himſelf with the dreſs of the ancients, to take care that he moves with grace, and ſpeaks with eaſe and dignity. Thus, it is preſumed, may be acquired, by attentive obſervation and repeated trials, that diction which is pure, but not affected; learned, but not pedantic; and claſſical at the ſame time that it is original. Theſe are the fair colours of ſtyle, which adorn the elegant, luminous, and flowing periods of Gravina and Lowth; and the harmonious and poliſhed verſes of Milton, Vida, and Sannazarius.

[n] See Walchius de Imitatione, c. xiv. p. 691. and c. xv.

CHAPTER V.

The Greek Language.

THE aſſertion will not perhaps be liable to be controverted by thoſe, who are beſt acquainted with ſuch ſubjects, and are beſt qualified to make extenſive and juſt compariſons, if it be ſaid that the Greek claims the ſuperiority over all other languages. In its numerous modes of expreſſion there is preciſion without obſcurity, and copiouſneſs without redundance. It owes the former to the various and diverſified inflections of its words, and the latter to the great number of its derivatives. In its general ſtructure and formation, a proper regard is paid to the ear, as well as to the underſtanding; for its energy and ſtrength are not more ſtriking, than its harmony. The ſtrictneſs of its rules does not impoſe too much reſtraint upon its expreſſions, and its grammatical ſyſtem is in every part exact and complete [a].

From a ſhort view of its hiſtory and characteriſtics, it will be evident, that this lan-

[a] See Monboddo's Origin of Languages, vol. iv. p. 25, &c.

guage

guage deserves to be held up as a perfect model of expression, and that it fully justifies the praise of those scholars and critics, who have celebrated its excellence, in proportion as they have enjoyed its beauties, and derived taste, improvement, and pleasure, from the perusal of its incomparable writers.

The East was the fruitful source of the literature, as well as of the science, and the mythology of the Greeks. Letters were communicated by Cadmus and his Phœnician followers to them; and they were more indebted to the roving disposition, or the necessities of strangers, than to their own active curiosity, for this acquisition. It is probable that, before they received this valuable species of knowledge, they represented their thoughts by delineating the figures of plants and animals, as the Egyptians did in their hieroglyphics, because the Greek word *γραφειν* signifies both to paint and to write; and *σηματα*, or *σημεια*, mean as well the images of natural objects, as artificial marks, or characters.

The oral language of ancient Greece, before it rose from a state of barbarism, was simple and uncompounded. It was formed from the primitive dialects of the Helle-nians

nians and Pelaſgians. So ſmall was the original ſtock of Grecian eloquence, that all the words are derived from an inconſiderable number of primitives. But the acute and ingenious ſpirit of the people gradually diſplayed itſelf in the increaſe and improvement of their modes of expreſſion, as they advanced in the cultivation of other arts, and the progreſſive ſtages of civilized life.

The names of the original characters of Phœnicia and thoſe of Greece are ſimilar; and the reſemblance of their forms, and the ancient mode of writing from the right hand to the left, which is common to them both, furniſh a deciſive proof, that they had one and the ſame origin. In proceſs of time they changed their arrangement in writing, and inſcribed their characters in alternate order, from the left to the right, and from right to left, as appeared by many authentic monuments of antiquity, particularly the celebrated Sigean inſcription, of which a curious repreſentation is given in Shuckford's Connection of ſacred and profane Hiſtory[b].

[b] Vol. i. p. 264, &c. Plato ſeems to intimate that the Greek language was derived from the Hebrew, which he calls the language of the Barbarians. He divides words into two claſſes; the primitive, which he aſcribes to God; and

Some letters were afterwards added, the powers of others were altered, written vowels were introduced to ſupply that deficiency which was common to Greek with all the Oriental dialects; and the combinations of vowels called diphthongs were introduced, which are in a great degree peculiar to the Greek language. The diviſions into dialects were gradually formed by the independent and unconnected people, whoſe names they bear; and as they had no common metropolis, they adapted their modes of ſpeech to their own provincial manners and character. The Doric, of which the Eolic was a branch, was ſpoken in Bœotia, the Peloponneſus, Epirus, Crete, Sicily, and all the Grecian colonies planted upon the coaſts of Italy. It was characteriſtic of the unpoliſhed manners of the Dorians themſelves, and bore ſome analogy to that grandeur and ſimplicity of deſign, which are viſible in the remaining ſpecimens of their architecture. The moſt perfect examples of this dialect, which the ravages of time have ſpared, exiſt in the Paſtorals of Theocritus, the Odes of Pindar, and the mathematical treatiſes of Archimedes. Although

and the derivative, which he attributes to human invention. Plato in Cratylo. Montfaucon Palæographia, p. 115. 121. 553. Voſſius de Arte Gramm. lib. i. c. 10.

the Ionic is the prevailing dialect of Homer, he has diversified his works with the various forms of expression which the others supplied. The favourable opportunities afforded by his travels into the different parts of Greece and its colonies, furnished him with this advantage, and gave him a complete command of all the provincial phraseology [p]. The progressive improvements of the Ionians were communicated to their dialect, which was spoken on all the populous coasts of Asia Minor, as well as in the territories of Attica. The witty and ingenious inhabitants of that province advanced it to that state of refinement, elegance, and sweetness, which charm the classical reader in the Tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides, the Comedies of Aristophanes, the Works of Xenophon, the Dialogues of Plato, the Treatises of Aristotle, and the Orations of Demosthenes.

The Athenians were celebrated for the greatest delicacy of taste. Even the inferior classes of citizens decided not only upon the sentiments delivered by the public speakers, but criticised the purity of their language, and the harmony of their periods. So ex-

[p] Inquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer, p. 282, &c.

quisite was their judgment, as oftentimes to border upon fastidiousness; and the least deviation from the established rules of propriety offended their ears. As a remarkable instance of their refinement, we are told that Theophrastus, the celebrated author of the Characters, a native of Lesbos, and a disciple of Plato, who gave him his name for the fluency and elegance of his diction, was discovered by one of the common people of Athens to be a stranger, by his too great accuracy of pronunciation [q].

The theory of derivation adopted by the author of "the Origin and Progress of Language," according to which all the words of the Greek language are derived from duads of vowels, originated with Hemsterhusius, one of the most eminent scholars of his age. Not only the vowels regularly taken from Α to Υ, and terminated with Ω, are made the basis of this plan; but the most ancient consonants are either prefixed to them, or inserted between them, so as to form about a hundred radical verbs. With these, other consonants and vowels were mixed, and variously combined; and thus the whole language is supposed to have been gradually constructed and

[q] Quintilian, lib. viii. c. 1.

furnifhed with its abundant ftores of derivative words[r].

We do not hefitate to acknowledge, that this theory is very ingenious, and deferves the examination of thofe, who are fond of investigating the origin of languages. The Greek, no doubt, is diftinguifhed by very ftrong marks of a methodical ftructure. But ought it not to be confidered, whether language, like the government of nations, does not arife out of peculiar circumftances and fituations? Is it not probable that neceffity, the invention of arts, and the exercife of various occupations, are its genuine fources? After a people have emerged from a favage ftate, in which all their attention has been employed in procuring the means of fubfiftence, and they have made fome confiderable advances in refinement, they have then leifure to fix the proper ftandard of their language, to reduce it to order, and complete its artificial form. For its origin, therefore, it can be little indebted to the fyftematic precifion of rules, whatever it may owe to them for its improvement. The ages of barbarifm may

[r] Origin and Progrefs of Language, vol. ii. p. 540. vol. iv. p. 54. Lennep's Etymologicon Prolegom. p. 27. and vol. ii.

produce

produce warriors and legiſlators; but it required a leſs turbulent and more refined ſtate of ſociety, for grammarians and philologiſts to ariſe, and for works of literature to be compoſed, and regulated by their laws.

The Characteriſtics of the Greek Language.

Among its numerous beauties, it is deſervedly celebrated for ſweetneſs, as well as variety of ſounds, to which our pronunciation is far from doing juſtice, from a want of the ſame compaſs, and modulation of tones. By tranſpoſing, altering, and taking away letters, the Greek was ſoftened, and made more pleaſing to the ear. The diphthongs, as well as the open vowels, ſwell and elevate the tones, in a manner ſuperior to modern languages. The declenſions of nouns, the conjugations of verbs, the changes of dialects, and the number of poetical licences, produce the greateſt quantity of terminations. Many words are cloſed with vowels, and very few with mute conſonants, as is the caſe in the Oriental, Gothic, and Celtic languages.

In the works of Homer in particular, the beauty of ſingle words, conſidered only with reſpect to ſound, is remarkable. With conſummate ſkill and taſte, he has made choice of

of ſuch as are rough or ſmooth, long or ſhort, harmonious or diſcordant to the ear, ſo as to agree exactly with the nature of his different ſubjects. The names of perſons, rivers, mountains, and countries are ſometimes ſoft and flowing, and ſometimes grand and ſonorous, and contribute in no ſmall degree to improve the charms of his deſcriptions [e].

The works of the beſt Greek authors are much to be admired for the ſkilful arrangement of words, and the beauties of finiſhed compoſition. From the accurate diſtinctions made by genders and caſes in nouns, and by perſons in verbs, no invariable ſituation of words was neceſſary; and conſequently ſuch as were declinable could be placed in any part of a ſentence without injury to its perſpicuity. In this reſpect modern languages are very defective; for, as the nouns and verbs in general are indeclinable, and muſt be attached to their reſpective articles and auxiliary verbs, an uniform and fixed poſition is neceſſary, in which no change can be made without detriment to the ſenſe, if not total con-

[e] Homer's Catalogue of the Ships will illuſtrate this remark: if taken in a geographical point of view, it may be conſidered as an accurate map of Greece. Iliad, lib. ii. l. 494, &c.

fuſion

fuſion of it. Greek compoſitions, on the contrary, abound with grand and lofty ſentences, conſiſting of members of various extent, terminating ſometimes with one part of ſpeech, and ſometimes with another. Hence the ear is conſtantly gratified by an endleſs variety of pauſes, and an harmonious flow of periods; and an emphatical word, like the principal figure in a picture, is placed where it will produce the moſt ſtriking effect. In poetry this arrangement is ſtill more remarkable, as it is accommodated to every different kind of metre. All theſe changes were made with ſo much ſkill and effect, as to ſatisfy the refined judgment of Homer, and Pindar, Plato, and Demoſthenes. Unable as the moderns are to equal theſe beauties, or even to form a complete idea of their nature; yet the delicacy of taſte and extent of knowledge poſſeſſed by the ancient critics, who lived ſome ages after the moſt flouriſhing era of Grecian literature, amply qualified them for this purpoſe. Both Cicero and Dionyſius the Halicarnaſſian enter into many particular and critical diſcuſſions on the melodious conſtruction of Greek ſentences, in proſe as well as verſe, conduct their obſervations upon regular principles, and illuſtrate them by the examples of the moſt eminent authors.

Other characteristic properties of the Greek language will appear by considering the particles, which are the nice links, which connect sentences and members of sentences with each other. They are, indeed, too often regarded by superficial readers as redundant, or unmeaning; but when closely examined, they are found to possess particular force, energy, and precision. The diminutive words give great exactness and beauty to expression, and are calculated to annex to an object some pleasing idea of tenderness or familiarity. The dual number accurately distinguishes two persons from one, as well as from an indiscriminate and vague multitude, Different inflections of the same cases of nouns are adapted to all the uses of poetry and prose. The power of the double negative is very sensibly felt; and there are instances, where prohibition or contradiction is guarded even by three negatives, which enforce the sentiment in the greatest degree. The middle voice has the peculiar power of expressing, that a person is the subject of his own actions. The tenses are more numerous and more definite than those of any other language. In Greek alone are to be found a past imperative mood, a participle present of the passive voice, and a paulo-post future tense. Conditional action

is denoted by the ſubjunctive, and ſuch as relates to an object of deſire, by the optative mood. The variety and exactneſs of ideas diſplayed in all the modifications of the verb ſhow a refinement of thought, and a depth of metaphyſical reaſoning, applied to the diviſions of time, which prove the peculiar acuteneſs and unrivalled invention of the Greeks[f].

The prolific power of their language was not limited by any fixed bounds, or reſtrained by any certain rules. Verbs were the fruitful trees, which produced innumerable branches ſpringing from each other in the greateſt abundance and variety. They are ſometimes compounded with each other, and ſometimes with ſubſtantives; nouns are formed from them, and even from different tenſes and perſons of the ſame verb[g]. But the power

[f] Artium parens et altrix Græca diligentia eſt:
Literarum porro curam nulla gens attentius
Repperit: polivit uſque finem ad unguis extimum.
Terentianus Maurus.

[g] See Clarke's ingenious ſyſtem of the Greek tenſes, in his note on line 37. of the firſt book of the Iliad.

From πεποιημαι, ησαι, ηται, are derived ποιημα, ποιησις, ποιητης. See Monboddo, v. ii. p. 185.

There are thirty-four inſtances at leaſt of the verb being compounded with double prepoſitions, ἀντεμβαλλω, αντιπαρα-βαλλω, αντιπροβαλλω, &c. Inſtances of a verb and three prepoſitions

of compounding them with prepoſitions was of a much more extraordinary extent. With any one of the eighteen prepoſitions any verb, unleſs its ſignification made it naturally repugnant to ſuch an alliance, could be joined. There are numerous inſtances of ſuch combinations, and likewiſe of double and even treble prepoſitions being united with verbs and nouns. As ſuch compound words poſſeſs an unrivalled ſtrength, richneſs, and ſignificant brevity, they ſhow the creative powers of a language, which contains inexhauſtible reſources. Their effect is more particularly felt in poetry, which they ſupply with one of its moſt ſtriking and beautiful ornaments. To the genius of Homer they furniſhed appropriate expreſſion, and enabled him to give, even to an epithet, ſuch diſtinct and pictureſque ideas, as inferior poets convey with leſs effect in long deſcriptions. To this power of compounding words ſo extenſive and unbounded, no reſemblance can be traced in the productions of art, except in the indefinite combination of letters to form words, and the multiplication of numbers in arithmetic.

poſitions, ſuch as ὑπερεκπροῤῥεειν, are not uncommon in Homer. See Lord Monboddo, and Valkenaer apud Lennep, p. 24, 25.

From

From ſuch powers of language naturally aroſe a proportionable copiouſneſs. Even as early as the time of Homer, it had aſſumed a permanent character; and his works, produced in the infancy of arts and civilization, afforded a ſatisfactory proof, to what various ſubjects it could be applied. So full and complete indeed is the nature of his ſtyle, ſo far is it from affording any ground for complaints of its weakneſs and deficiency, that all ſcholars unite in their admiration of its energy and copiouſneſs. What are the thoughts of Virgil, Taſſo, or any modern poet, to which the diction of Homer, and the other great Grecian poets, could not give adequate expreſſion, and even embelliſh with additional and ſuperior beauties of harmony, richneſs, and variety of compoſition?

Style of Greek Writers.

Thus to the fertile and happy invention of writers of all deſcriptions did the Greek language ſupply an abundant ſtore of the moſt ſignificant terms; and every conception of the mind, every appearance of nature, and production of art, were conveyed by correſpondent and adequate words. The hiſtorian, the orator, and the philoſopher, exerciſed the

ſame freedom, energy, and beauty of expreſſion, as the poet himſelf. The action of genius upon the Grecian language was like that of the ſun, when it varies the glowing tints of light, and touches the clouds with the richeſt and moſt beautiful diverſity of colours. Herodotus, the firſt of Grecian hiſtorians, adorned his curious and entertaining work with the vocal flow and poetical terminations of the Ionic dialect. Thucycides diſtinguiſhed his celebrated hiſtory of the Peloponneſian war by a nervous and compact ſtyle, which was well adapted to the ſolidity of his obſervations, and the preciſion of his narrative. Iſocrates, in the elaborate ſtructure of ſentences, exemplified the precepts of the rhetoric he taught: and Demoſthenes, indulging the bold conceptions of his vigorous intellect, poured forth his reſiſtleſs eloquence in ſentences ſo ſtrong and rapid, as to bear down oppoſition, and flaſh conviction upon the minds of his hearers.

The Greek language aſſumed with eaſe the various forms, in which ancient philoſophy communicated its inſtructions to mankind. Ariſtotle was exact, conciſe, and vigorous; Plato was diffuſe, poetical, and majeſtic; Xenophon was ſimple and elegant, and

and by his admirable perſpicuity improved the charms of hiſtory and moral truth. The comedies of Ariſtophanes and Menander, however unlike in their characters and ſentiments, were both improved by the pure and refined beauties of the Attic dialect. Theocritus gave the artleſs graces of Doric ſimplicity to his paſtorals; and Sappho conveyed her tender ſentiments of paſſion in the pleaſing cadences of that kind of verſification, which is emphatically diſtinguiſhed by her name. The Alcaic Ode, the Elegy, and the Epigram are all marked by their own peculiar characters. The eaſy flow of Iambics, and the irregular combination of choral meaſures, adorned the dramatic productions of Æſchylus, Euripides, and Sophocles. Their language was a perfect image of the bold and verſatile genius of the people who ſpoke it; for it embraced the wide extent of human perceptions, was moulded into every form, and produced aſtoniſhment by its force, captivated attention by its beauty, and enraptured the ear by its varied and delightful melody [i].

[i] I conſider the Greek writers in this place ſolely with a view to the nature of their ſtyle. The other characteriſtic features of their works will be noticed in the hiſtory of Greece.

 While

While the Greeks conveyed the dictates of philoſophy to the underſtanding, held up the moſt pleaſing pictures to the imagination, or by the impulſe of paſſion melted and ſubdued the heart, the dreſs, in which they clothed their ideas, was at once rich, elegant, and graceful; and while they roſe to an elevation of genius, courage, and taſte, which has never been equalled, their words were the moſt harmonious, nervous, and expreſſive, that ever flowed from mortal lips.

From conſidering the excellence of this extraordinary language, we may indeed be diſpoſed to excuſe, or more properly ſpeaking, to applaud, the exalted ſtyle of praiſe, in which its powers were celebrated, by thoſe who were the moſt competent judges of its merits. The accents which flowed from the lips of the venerable Neſtor were ſaid to exceed the ſweetneſs of honey. It is an obſervation of the great Roman orator, that if Jupiter had communicated his will to mankind, he would have adopted the language of Plato. When Pericles addreſſed the Athenian aſſemblies, he did not, in the opinion of his contemporaries, merely convince his hearers by his perſuaſive arguments; but, to uſe the exalted language of his countrymen, ma-

jeſtic

jeſtic in voice and aſpect, and irreſiſtible in force, as if he commanded the elements of heaven, he overpowered the faculties of his aſtoniſhed hearers with the thunder and lightning of his eloquence.

Duration and Extent of the Language.

In addition to the curious circumſtances, which diſtinguiſh the Greek language, it may be remarked, that it was ſpoken and written with purity and elegance for a greater portion of time, than any other ever known in the world. The long period of twenty-three centuries will ſcarcely meaſure its continuance. We have ſeen, that as early as the time of Homer its ſtandard was fixed, and it continued to be cultivated till Conſtantinople was taken by the Turks, in the fifteenth century. A ſhort time before that event, although it exiſted in a degenerate ſtate among the common people, it was ſpoken with ſuch correctneſs and elegance by perſons of a liberal education, and particularly by the ladies of rank and high condition, as to give no very imperfect ſpecimen of the ſtyle of Ariſtophanes, Euripides, and the philoſophers and hiſtorians, who flouriſhed in the pureſt times. Such is the very curious fact related by the learned Philelphus, who viſited the metropo-

lis of the eaſtern empire twelve years only before it was taken by the Turks. The intermediate corruptions can only be marked by ſcholars of more than ordinary acuteneſs and erudition. By ſuch alone can the different colours and ſhades of diction be diſtinguiſhed in the works of writers, who lived at times ſo remote from Xenophon and Plato, as Euſtathius, the commentator on Homer, Anna Comnena, the daughter of the emperor Alexias, Chalcondylas, Procopius, and other writers, included in the liſt of the Byzantine hiſtorians.

The difference between pure Greek and that which was ſpoken and written by foreigners was much more ſtrongly marked. The writers of the New Teſtament fall much below the claſſical ſtandard. Hebrew idioms, and words uſed in new ſenſes, abound in their writings; and their ſtyle, which by modern ſcholars is called Helleniſtic, to diſtinguiſh it from pure Greek, will not bear the teſt of rigid criticiſm. Yet it is far from being of an uniform character, ſince we find that St. Luke wrote with more purity of expreſſion, St. John with more ſimplicity and plainneſs, and St. Paul with greater copiouſneſs and variety, than the other ſacred writers.

They approached nearer to pure Greek in proportion as they poſſeſſed the advantages of education, and were improved by intercourſe with the higher ranks of ſociety.

As this continued long to be a living language, ſo was its circulation very extenſive. Under the ſucceſſors of Alexander it was carried far beyond the limits of the Greek provinces, and long before the Chriſtian era it was ſpoken by Jews, Romans, and Africans. It was cultivated by the learned in Egypt and Syria, as well as in Italy, Gaul, Spain, and Carthage. Joſephus and Philo Judæus preferred it to their native language; and the writers of the New Teſtament adopted it as the beſt means to facilitate the propagation of Chriſtianity. This was the language of the early Roman hiſtorians, and both Lucullus and Cicero uſed it to record the accounts of their public tranſactions. Of its general prevalence, the latter ſpeaks in explicit terms in his Oration for Archias the poet; where he informs us, that, at a period when Latin was confined to very few diſtricts; the Greek authors were ſtudied, and their language was ſpoken in moſt parts of the world. With reſpect therefore to its wide diffuſion, the ancient Greek may be com-

pared to modern French, which at preſent forms ſo faſhionable and ſo general a branch of education. But whatever degree of delicacy the French may poſſeſs in common with the Greek, it wants many of its moſt diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics, and in particular its grace and harmony, its preciſion and copiouſneſs, its vigour and ſublimity.

The cauſes of the great extent of the Greek language were many. Numerous colonies planted in different parts of Europe, Aſia, and Africa; the commerce of the Greek merchants; the conqueſts of Alexander the Great, and the permanent eſtabliſhments, which he made, by building many large cities, contributed to this end. But the cauſe, which produced this diffuſion more than all others, was the intrinſic excellence of the language itſelf. It is a remarkable fact, that at the period when the provinces of Greece were reduced to the meaneſt vaſſalage, and the character of the people was ſunk to the loweſt ſtate of diſgrace in the opinion of their conquerors, their language ſtill continued to retain its high and original reputation, and was ſtudied not only by the Romans, but by perſons of reſpectability and diſtinction in all parts of the ancient world.

The

The pure Greek, as a living language, finally ſunk with the power of the eaſtern empire under the triumphant arms of the Turks.

Modern Greek.

Every ſcholar muſt naturally be deſirous to aſcertain the preſent ſtate of the Greek language. Its deviation from that which was formerly ſpoken, both with reſpect to pronunciation and grammar, is very conſiderable. The words of the language indeed, like Italian and Latin, are in ſubſtance the ſame as thoſe of ancient Greek; there is, however, an intermixture of Turkiſh with that which is ſpoken in Aſia; of Arabic with that which prevails on the coaſts of Africa; and of Italian with that which is uſed at Benevento, and in other parts of Italy. The modern Greeks pay only ſo much attention to grammar, as conſiſts in forming two caſes by inflection, namely, the genitive and the accuſative; and the perſons and numbers of the verbs: but with reſpect to declenſions and conjugations they obſerve no rules. In their conjugations they imitate the general practice of the moderns, by conſtantly making uſe of auxiliary verbs. In their pronunciation they ſtrictly attend to accent, and hence the

the quantity of words is not only disregarded, but often most grossly violated; and they have intirely lost that sweet modulation and variety of sound, which graced the lips of their ancestors [k]. Such is their neglect of ancient literature, that the New Testament, as well as the works of their own classics, have been translated for their use. The decline of their language has kept pace with the degeneracy of their manners; for in consequence of a neglect of composition, and inattention to the ancient models of elegance and purity, they speak a barbarous and coarse dialect. The descendants of Pericles and Demosthenes, oppressed by a despotic government, and immersed in bigotry and superstition, are ignorant of the pure phraseology of their illustrious ancestors; and it is a remarkable fact, that of the seventy different jargons, which are now spoken in Greece, that of the Athenians is held to be the most corrupt and barbarous [l]. The mixture of their language with the dialect of Turkey and other nations bears a striking resemblance to the magnificent

[k] Monboddo. Forster on Accent and Quantity, p. 207. For an elegant sketch of the political and literary state of Greece during her good and bad fortune, see Harris's Philol. Inquiries, c. iii.

[l] De Pauw, v. i. p. 70.

ruins of marble temples, remarkable for exquiſite architecture, which are ſeen in the ſtreets of Athens to ſupport the rude cottages and mean ſheds of the Grecian ſlaves.

From the whole of this ſurvey of the *Engliſh*, *Latin*, and *Greek* languages, we may form a judgment of the origin, progreſs, characteriſtics, and beauties of each; and we may be enabled to determine their reſpective merits. When we allow to the Greek all its due praiſe for harmony, copiouſneſs, and that amazing ductility, by which it could expreſs with eaſe in derivative and compound words, new indeed, but perfectly analogical, every diſcovery in ſcience, or invention in the arts; when we commend the Latin for its majeſty, preciſion, and vigour; and when we hold up the claſſical writers in each as the beſt models of learning and taſte, let us not neglect to form a proper eſtimate of our own tongue. The Engliſh language, deriving its ſtock of words from ſo many different ſources, and very imperfectly underſtood without the aid of Greek and Latin, is energetic, rich, and copious. And, perhaps, if we were confined to the knowledge of one modern language to the excluſion of all others, no one could be found better adapted to all the pur-

poſes

poses of social intercourse; more capable of expressing the general sentiments of the mind, or more deserving the praise, which we have, it is presumed on a due consideration of its relative merits, assigned to it [m].

[m] See p. 143.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER VI.

Eloquence.

"NOTHING ſeems to me more excellent, than to be able to engage the affections, convince the underſtandings, and guide the inclinations of whole aſſemblies, and even to direct thoſe inclinations from their original courſe into a new channel, by the commanding powers of eloquence. This noble faculty has in every free ſtate, more particularly in times of peace and tranquillity, been always held in the higheſt eſteem, and obtained the greateſt influence. And indeed what can be a juſter ſubject of admiration, than that amidſt a vaſt multitude one man only, or a very ſmall number, ſhould riſe ſuperior to all others in the exerciſe of that power, which nature has equally beſtowed upon all the human race? Or what is ſo pleaſing to the ear, or ſo gratifying to the underſtanding, as a judicious and ſolid diſcourſe delivered in elegant and poliſhed language? Or what is ſo efficacious, or ſo noble, as to influence the people, the judges, and the ſenate, by the charms of oratory? What is ſo great, ſo generous,

rous, or divine, as to refcue the virtuous from oppreffion, and protect the unfortunate from injuftice? Can any thing be more ufeful than to be always furnifhed with the arms which eloquence fupplies, to affert your rights, and to repel the attacks of injury? And not to confine our obfervations within the limits of the courts of juftice, or the fenate-houfe, what is there in the midft of retirement from bufinefs more agreeable and entertaining; what better proof can be given of the refinements of a liberal education, than a flow of elegant and polifhed converfation? It is indeed the peculiar characteriftic of our nature, which diftinguifhes us from the brute creation, that we can exprefs our thoughts by language, and both enjoy and communicate the pleafures of focial intercourfe. Who therefore does not hold fuch an endowment in great eftimation? and who does not think it an object of honourable ambition to furpafs others in the exercife of that faculty, in which rational beings fhew their afcendency over inferior animals? But not to dwell upon inconfiderable points, let us proceed to the moft material.—What other power than that of eloquence could have proved fufficiently efficacious to induce the fcattered individuals of mankind to quit a rude and favage life,

life, in order to form regular communities? and what other power could have ſoftened their barbarity by the refinements of civilized manners, or after ſtates were founded, what other power, I ſay, could have reſtrained them by ſalutary inſtitutions, and ſecured their proſperity and happineſs by forms of government, and eſtabliſhments of law? To cloſe this ſubject, which is indeed almoſt inexhauſtible, I lay it down as an indiſputable principle, that upon the prudence and talents of an accompliſhed orator, not only his own perſonal reſpectability, but the welfare of numerous individuals, nay even the ſafety of the government depend. I therefore earneſtly exhort you, my young friends, to perſevere in your preſent courſe, and to cultivate with inceſſant diligence the ſtudy of eloquence, for the ſake of your own reputation, the advantage of your friends, and the proſperity and glory of your country [a]."

Such is an imperfect repreſentation of the

[a] Cicero de Oratore, lib. i. ſect. 30. Edit. Prouſt. There is a very fine paſſage upon the ſame ſubject at the beginning of the firſt book of his Treatiſe de Inventione, and another in De Natura Deorum, lib. ii. p. 237. fol. tom. 2.

ani-

animated and luminous encomium, which Cicero, in the beginning of his celebrated Dialogue de Oratore, pronounced upon his favourite art. And to teach the beſt uſe of this noble faculty of ſpeaking, and point out the method by which it can be made to anſwer the moſt important purpoſes, is the great end of the art of Rhetoric. It is evident that no ſtudy more fully repays the labour beſtowed upon its cultivation, if we reflect upon the riſe and progreſs of eloquence in the early ages of the world, and the great improvements that have been made in it both in ancient and modern times. We may recollect the extraordinary degree of perfection, to which it was carried by Demoſthenes and Cicero; and their productions which have come down to us give the moſt ſatisfactory proofs that they were conſummate maſters of their art, and that they excelled in it, not leſs by the extent and variety of their knowledge, than the brilliancy of their genius. In our own times, we ſee the effects of rude and unpoliſhed eloquence upon the minds of the common people in the harangues of wild demagogues, and the ſermons of itinerant enthuſiaſts: it is evident, therefore, what a powerful inſtrument of perſuaſion and utility it may be rendered, when placed in the hands

of

of well-educated perſons, who to all the natural advantages of voice, action, and abilities, which ignorant ſpeakers may poſſeſs, unite the guidance of rules, and an acquaintance with the beſt examples.

Nor will a knowledge of the principles of Rhetoric, upon which the chief beauties of compoſition depend for their grace and effect, be of inconſiderable uſe to the hearer or reader, as well as the ſpeaker. It will enable them to unravel the intricacies of compoſition in general, whether in verſe or proſe, to underſtand the principles upon which it is founded, and to form a right judgment of its merits.

If objections be ever ſtarted againſt eloquence, conſidered as a faculty, which may be made the inſtrument of evil as well as of good, it is obvious that ſimilar objections may be urged againſt the exerciſe of the faculty of reaſon, as it is too often employed to lead men into error. But no one would think of bringing a ſerious argument from this abuſe of the intellectual powers againſt the improvement of our underſtandings[b]. Reaſon, eloquence, and every art moſt eſſential to the

[b] Quint. lib. ii. c. 17.

comfort of life, are liable to be misapplied, and may prove dangerous in the hands of bad men; but it would argue an excess of levity to contend, that upon this account they ought to be neglected, and held in no estimation. While the orator employs his talents, and practises the rules of his profession, in the pursuit of that end for which it was originally designed, viz. the persuading men to good and virtuous actions, and the dissuading them from every measure that is dishonourable and vicious; nothing can be more excellent in itself, or more useful to society.

Rhetoric is the art of speaking and writing with elegance and dignity, in order to please, instruct, and persuade. Elegance consists in the purity and perspicuity of language [c]. The former may be acquired by studying the most elegant authors, by conversing with the best company, and the frequent practice of composition. The latter consists in making use of the clearest and most intelligible expressions, in avoiding ambiguous words, affected brevity, perplexity of periods, and confusion of metaphors. Dignity arises from sublime thoughts, and noble and elevated tropes and figures.

[c] Arist. Rhet. lib. iii. c. 2. Quint. lib. viii. c. 2. &c.

The

The terms *Rhetoric* and *Oratory*, having no other difference, than that the former has a Greek, and the latter a Latin derivation, may be confidered as fynonymous. The cafe is not however the fame with refpect to the words *Rhetorician* and *Orator*. For although the Greeks ufed the former both to exprefs thofe who taught the art, and thofe who practifed it; yet the Romans, when they adopted the word, limited its fignification to the teachers, and called the public fpeakers Orators. Before Rhetoric was made an art diftinct from philofophy, a circumftance much lamented by Cicero and Quintilian [d], the fame perfons taught both; and thefe teachers were called Sophifts, as well as Rhetoricians. But, becaufe they employed their ingenuity rather to fupport falfehood, than to difcover truth, they brought difcredit upon themfelves and their profeffion; and therefore the word Sophift has been generally ufed in a bad fenfe, to fignify a perfon fkilled in the arts of cavilling, rather than qualified to fpeak accurately and ably upon any fubject.

It may be thought unreafonable to fetter the mind by fyftems, and reftrain the flights of eloquence by rules. But it is evident

[d] Quint. lib. i. fect. 2. Cicero de Orat. lib. iii.

 from

from experience and obſervation, that rules may greatly aſſiſt genius, provided they point out the right road, without confining the learner to a ſingle track, from which he is told it is unlawful to deviate. They are undoubtedly neceſſary before practice gives that eaſe, which may enable him to truſt to his own well-regulated exertions, and proceed without a guide.

To enumerate the rules of Rhetoric would require too minute a detail; and they will be beſt learnt from thoſe writers, who both in ancient and modern times have obtained great reputation by their works upon the ſubject. Such are Ariſtotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and their faithful followers, Blair, Campbell, and Fenelon. To aſcertain the leading principles relating to eloquence in general, it may be ſufficient to conſider its productions under four diſtinct heads.

I. The ſources of argument.

II. The nature of ſtyle, and the ornaments of compoſition.

III. The arrangement of the different parts of a diſcourſe.

IV. Propriety of action and delivery.

The Sources of Argument.

I. The baſis of all eloquence is invention. It is this prolific faculty, which enables the ſpeaker to form and combine ſuch ideas, as are neceſſary for the ſtatement, explanation, and illuſtration of his ſubject, with a view to conciliate the minds of his hearers, and engage their judgment and paſſions in his favour. A livelineſs of imagination and a quickneſs of thought are great aſſiſtants to invention; and they who poſſeſs theſe happy gifts of nature are found to be rarely at a loſs for reaſons to defend their own opinions, and to diſprove thoſe of their opponents. Of this prime faculty the moſt eminent orators and poets were in full poſſeſſion; and we find that, ſo far from giving us any cauſe to complain of barrenneſs of invention, they fill our minds with the abundant produce of intellectual fertility. This remark, among other inſtances, is particularly juſtified by the examples of Homer, Plato, and Cicero. To collect materials for the employment of genius, muſt neceſſarily form the great buſineſs of life. Invention, ſtrictly ſpeaking, implies diſcovery, rather than creation, and muſt be underſtood to ſignify new combinations of thoſe

thoſe images, which had been previouſly ſtored in the memory.

Accurate learning and extenſive knowledge, the proſpects of nature, the diſcoveries of art —the aids of education—and the reſults of experience and obſervation upon mankind, are the proper funds to ſupply this faculty with its requiſite ſtores. Hence are furniſhed the various topics, whether *external* or *internal*, which are applicable to the different kinds of cauſes, whether *demonſtrative, deliberative*, or *judicial*, and which are treated of at large by the Rhetoricians, and particularly by Ariſtotle and Cicero[e]. The judgment muſt ever be active in the right application of the aſſiſtance, which genius and extenſive knowledge can bring to every particular ſubject; whatever is trifling or ſuperfluous muſt be rejected; and nothing admitted into a compoſition that is not fully to the purpoſe, and calculated to anſwer the end originally propoſed. The bright and clear ſtream of eloquence, aſſiſted by every tributary rill that can increaſe its fulneſs, ſhould flow not in a circuitous and winding courſe, but with a direct and rapid current.

[e] Cicero de Inventione, lib. i. p. 55. fol. edit.

Style,

Style, and the Ornaments of Composition.

II. Without the requisites of a proper style, and the judicious introduction of the ornaments of composition, a discourse will be dry, jejune, and uninteresting. As from hence eloquence derives its chief excellence, beauty and splendour; it is of the greatest importance to the orator to be well acquainted with the constituent parts of true ornament, and the various kinds of style.

A good writer or speaker to purity and perspicuity of expression will add ornament; upon which depends, if not the usefulness, at least the principal beauty of eloquence. This it is which gives to composition magnificence, sweetness, and elegance; which engages attention, captivates the hearts, and excites the applauses of an audience; which distinguishes the orator from the philosopher and the man of business, which raises his language above the simplicity of common prose, tempers the severity of his arguments, improves the keenness of his wit, and enlivens the brisk sallies of his fancy. This it is which properly speaking makes rhetoric an art; all its other parts may be attained by the mere kindness of nature: but without disci-

diſcipline, without much ſtudy and experience, the perfection of ornament, ſuch as characterizes the beſt ſpeakers, can never be attained.

Of ſtyle in general it may be remarked, that every country poſſeſſes not only a peculiar language, but a peculiar mode of expreſſion, ſuited to the particular temper and genius of its inhabitants. Moſt of the Eaſtern nations are remarkable for a lofty and majeſtic diction, which is full and ſonorous, ſtrong and forcible, and animated by bold and expreſſive figures. On the contrary, the Northern languages are more ſimple, and generally partake of the cold influence of their climate. In the former the warmth of imagination predominates; in the latter there is more of the ſtrictneſs and correctneſs of judgment.

But the principal diſtinctions of ſtyle ariſe from the diverſity of ſubjects. The ſame mode of expreſſion would be as inconſiſtent upon different occaſions, as the ſame dreſs for perſons of different ranks. Propriety, therefore, requires that expreſſion ſhould be adapted to the nature of the ſubject. Style is divided into three kinds, viz. the *low* or

plain

plain ſtyle ; the *middle* or *temperate*; and the *lofty* or *ſublime*.

A plain ſtyle is the genuine language of nature ; it may be eaſy, inclining to the familiar, and elegant, at the ſame time that it is inartificial and unaffected. As it is deſigned to make things perfectly intelligible, and to ſet them in a clear light, the proper ſubjects of it are epiſtles, dialogues, eſſays, narratives, works of ſcience and philoſophy, or any other topics that require to be treated without ornament, or addreſſes to the paſſions. Simplicity and eaſe both of thought and expreſſion are its peculiar beauties ; and the choiceſt examples of it are to be found in the works of Xenophon and Cæſar, the Sermons of Secker, and the Tales of Swift.

The middle ſtyle is beſt adapted to thoſe ſubjects which require gravity, accuracy, and force of expreſſion. It accords with fine thoughts, as a low ſtyle is beſt ſuited to thoſe which are common, and the ſublime is beſt adapted to thoſe which are great and dignified. A fine thought deſerves that character from poſſeſſing dignity, beauty, delicacy, and novelty. As the ſubjects that belong to the middle ſtyle are important, though not of ſo

ſo exalted a nature, as wholly to captivate the mind, and divert it from attending to the diction; ſo it admits all the ornaments and beauties of compoſition. This is the ſphere likewiſe of the moſt highly finiſhed and moſt elaborate writing. This is the ſoil favourable to the growth of the faireſt and moſt beautiful flowers of eloquence. Here ſtrong and emphatical words, flowing periods, harmonious numbers, vivid tropes, and bright and animated figures, find their proper place. The beſt examples of this kind are the dialogues of Plato, the ſpeeches of Livy, and the moſt admired orations of Cicero.

Lofty and elevated thoughts form the proper baſis of the ſublime ſtyle. Such thoughts relate either to divine ſubjects, to the works of nature, or ſuch expreſſions, or actions, as are eſteemed the nobleſt and the beſt. The true ſublime is perfectly conſiſtent with the greateſt plainneſs and ſimplicity of expreſſion. Depending ſolely on its native energy for its effect upon the mind, it rather rejects than ſolicits the aid of ornament; for when the ſoul is elevated to the utmoſt of its powers by a noble idea, it attends not to the niceties of language; but, from its own vigour and lively conception of things, expreſſes them in terms

terms the moſt conciſe and emphatical, and beſt adapted to their nature. Dignity and majeſty are the proper qualities of this ſpecies of ſtyle, both as to the thought and expreſſion; as may be beſt exemplified by numerous paſſages in the holy Scriptures, the Iliad of Homer, and the Paradiſe Loſt of Milton.

Under the ſublime is properly claſſed the *pathetic* of compoſition, wherein the greateſt power is exerted over the paſſions. Here we are intereſted, agitated, and carried along with the Speaker or Writer, wherever he chooſes to conduct us; our paſſions are made to riſe in uniſon with his; we love, deteſt, admire, reſent, as he inſpires us; and are prompted to feel with fervour, and to act with energy, in obedience to the particular impulſe, which he gives to our minds. Quintilian with great propriety calls this power of moving the paſſions, the ſoul and ſpirit of his art[f]: as the proper uſe of the paſſions is not to blind or to counteract the exerciſe of reaſon, but to move in conformity to it, if an improper impulſe be ſometimes given to them, it is not the fault of the art, but of the artiſt. The Pulpit admits this ſpecies of eloquence, as is clear from the Sermons of

[f] Quint. lib. vi. c. 2.

Maſſil-

Maſſillon and Bourdaloue: but the debates in popular aſſemblies open the moſt extenſive field for its diſplay.

The diction of an orator may include all the characteriſtics of theſe three kinds of ſtyle. As he ſpeaks ſometimes to prove and to inſtruct, ſometimes to entertain and to delight, and ſometimes to rouſe, to animate, and to aſtoniſh, he muſt be occaſionally plain and eaſy, manly and energetic, figurative and flowery, pathetic and ſublime [g]. All this variety, however, is rarely neceſſary upon the ſame occaſion. Due regard muſt be paid to the nature of the ſubject, the diſpoſitions of the audience, the time, the place, and all other circumſtances. Cicero refers us to ſome orations of his own for examples in each kind. His Oration for Cæcina is written in the low ſtyle, that for the Manilian law in the middle, and that for Rabirius in the ſublime. His Orations againſt Verres are ſpecimens of a mixture of all the different kinds.

Figures of ſpeech were firſt introduced by neceſſity, deriving their origin from a want of ſimple expreſſions. The moſt ancient and moſt original languages, ſuch as the Hebrew,

[g] Quint. lib. xii. c. 10. et 12.

Arabic,

Arabic, and the American and Indian dialects, are highly picturesque and metaphorical. That which was at first the result of necessity was in time cultivated for the sake of embellishment; like garments, which were originally used to protect the person from the inclemency of the weather, and were afterwards worn for the sake of ornament. The imagination and the passions have a very extensive influence over every language: their operations are expressed by words taken from sensible objects; and the names of these sensible objects were in all languages the words most easily introduced; and were by degrees extended to those thoughts, of which men had more obscure conceptions, and to which they found it more difficult to assign distinct appellations. They borrowed therefore the name of some sensible idea, where they found, or fancied they found, some affinity. Hence the origin of tropes and figures, the former of which convey two ideas to the mind, by means of one word; the latter throw the sentence into a different form from the common manner of expression. The use of tropes and figures opens the widest field for the invention of an orator, as they allow him to give that range to his imagination, which is highly gratifying to a man of genius.

nius. *Metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, irony, simile, prosopopœia*, the *antithesis*, and the *climax*, as they display the ingenuity of a speaker, and set off his ideas to advantage; so are they capable of affording great pleasure to his hearers, whenever they rise naturally from the subject, and are introduced with judgment and effect. They fix attention, excite admiration, and inspire delight; they speak the language of the passions, and represent the different emotions of the mind, by the most lively images of fancy; and, provided they are scattered over a composition by the hand of taste, they improve every topic by heightening its beauty and augmenting its strength.

The Arrangement of the different Parts of a Discourse.

III. It is necessary that all parts of a speech be placed in their proper order, and united in such a manner, as to render the whole clear in itself, and easy to be understood. A regular arrangement of parts is of the greatest advantage to the speaker, as it assists his memory, and carries him through his discourse, without tautology or confusion. He ought never to forget that perspicuity of order is as necessary as perspicuity of language.

The parts that compoſe a regular ſpeech are divided by the ingenious author of the Lectures on the Belles Lettres into ſix, viz. the *exordium,* or *introduction*; the *ſtatement,* and the diviſion of the ſubject; the *narration,* or explication; the *reaſoning,* or arguments; the *pathetic part*; and the *concluſion.* Theſe diſtinctions are ſufficiently clear and intelligible, to preclude the neceſſity of comment or explanation. Cicero divided an oration into the ſame number of parts, but gave them ſomewhat different names, viz. *exordium, narration, propoſition, confirmation, confutation,* and *concluſion*; and this is the arrangement uſually adopted in the ſyſtems of Rhetoric. The *propoſition* of Cicero correſponds with the *ſtatement* of Blair; and the *pathetic* in the ſcheme of Cicero forms a part of the *concluſion.* It is as improbable, that theſe artificial diſtinctions were ever ſcrupulouſly regarded by a ſpeaker, as that the works on Poetry by Ariſtotle or Horace were ever followed in the compoſition of an Epic Poem; and yet Commentators have not been wanting, who have endeavoured to reduce the moſt impaſſioned ſpeeches in Virgil to the ſame regular diviſions, as the orations of Cicero.

There

There may be many excellent ſpeeches, where ſeveral of theſe parts are wanting, where the ſpeaker, for inſtance, uſes no exordium, as is the caſe in the firſt Oration againſt Catiline, but begins abruptly. There may be others, where he finds no neceſſity to divide his ſubject into parts, as in ſome orations of Demoſthenes, but enters at once into his ſubject, and is carried on by an uninterrupted flow of argument, till he reaches his concluſion. As however theſe have always been conſidered as the conſtituent parts of a ſpeech, and as in every one ſome of them muſt neceſſarily be found, they properly obtain a place in all ſyſtems of Rhetoric.

This method is not ſo ſtrictly obſerved, as not occaſionally to admit of *digreſſion, tranſition*, and *amplification*, which give great beauty, if judiciouſly managed, to Poetry and Eloquence. Of digreſſion there are ſtriking examples in Cicero's Oration for the poet Archias; where he leaves the main ſubject of the vindication of his client, to expreſs his commendation of polite literature. The tranſition is abſolutely neceſſary, where a diſcourſe conſiſts of many parts: but it is the rapid and abrupt tranſition, which is moſt to be admired

admired for its effect in rouſing the attention. Of this there are various examples in the orations of Cicero.

Amplification does not merely ſignify a method of enlarging an object, but of repreſenting it in the fulleſt and moſt comprehenſive view, that it may in the moſt lively manner ſtrike the mind and influence the paſſions. Of this an inſtance is given in the noble encomium on eloquence, which forms the introduction to this chapter. There is another example in the Oration of Cicero for the Manilian Law; when, having firſt lamented the want of good generals at that time among the Romans, he expatiates upon the qualities requiſite to conſtitute a complete commander; and cloſes his deſcription with proving, that all theſe qualities were united in Pompey.

The power of eloquence appears in nothing to ſuch extent and advantage, as in a copiouſneſs of expreſſion, or a proper degree of amplification, ſuited to the nature of the ſubject. A ſhort detail or deſcription is too often attended with obſcurity, from an omiſſion of ſome material circumſtances. But when the images of things are drawn in

their

their juſt proportion, painted in their proper colours, ſet in a clear and full light, and repreſented under different points of view, with all the ſtrength and beauty of eloquence, they captivate the minds of the audience, and by an irreſiſtible force move and bend them to the will of the ſpeaker. And this is preciſely the effect intended to be produced by the exertion of that power of eloquence called Ενάργεια, or *evidentia*, ſo much inſiſted upon, and ſo fully deſcribed by Ariſtotle, Cicero, and Quintilian[h]. Here the audience are made ſpectators of the ſcene which the ſpeaker deſcribes: here is no neceſſity to call in the aid of figurative language, but only to repreſent in ſtrong, energetic, and vivid terms, what has paſſed, and what he wiſhes to impreſs upon the mind. Here every object is viſible, diſtinct, and affecting; every being lives, moves, and acts; and every circumſtance is with a happy ſelection of topics brought forward, that can convince the judgment, or overpower the heart. No writers excel more in this ſpecies of eloquence than Livy and Tacitus.

It is the proper end of oratory for the

[h] Quint. lib. vi. c. 2. Ciceronis Acad. iv. 17. Ariſtotelis Rhet. lib. iii. c. 11.

ſpeaker

ſpeaker to expreſs himſelf in ſuch a manner, as completely to accompliſh his purpoſe, whether it be to inſtruct, to pleaſe, or to perſuade; and he who adapts his language, and his ſentiments, with the greateſt ability, to theſe ends, is beſt entitled to the prize of eloquence. Hence it is evident, that the eſſence of all that deſerves the name of oratory is far from conſiſting in vehement action, and wordy declamation; but depends upon good ſenſe, and accurate knowledge, expreſſed in ſpirited language, and recommended by a pleaſing and correct delivery. To be complete maſter of a ſubject is the firſt requiſite; to be well furniſhed with matter and argument will give to a diſcourſe an air of manlineſs and dignity, which is a powerful inſtrument of perſuaſion. Ornament, if there be any genius, will follow of courſe.

He who wiſhes to produce the deſired effect in ſpeaking, muſt be free from all inſincerity. He only can addreſs himſelf effectually to the heart, and the feelings of others, whoſe mind glows with the warmth of ſenſibility, and whoſe arguments reſult from conviction. He muſt feel the influence of thoſe paſſions and emotions, which he wiſhes to inſpire. An aſſumed character and an affecta-

 tion

tion of feeling will not be long concealed under the diſguiſe of diſſimulation. The greateſt orators were diſtinguiſhed by the virtues which they laboured the moſt ſtrenuouſly to inculcate. Demoſthenes and Cicero were eminent for a manly and patriotic ſpirit; and thoſe ſpeeches, into which they have infuſed it, attract moſt admiration from the world.

Propriety of Action and Delivery.

IV. In the delivery of a ſpeech great judgment is neceſſary; and there is no part of eloquence, which ſtands more in need of inſtructions. The orator muſt be careful to avoid the extremes of awkwardneſs and affectation; he muſt not be inanimate on the one hand, or theatrical on the other. To follow a good practitioner in this part of the art will be of more advantage to him, than all the Rhetoricians either ancient or modern. It is juſtly remarked by Cicero, that every thought and emotion of the ſoul have their appropriate countenance, voice, and geſture; and the whole body, every variation of the face, and tone of the voice, like the ſtrings of a muſical inſtrument, act agreeably to the impulſe they receive from the mind[i]. The correſpondence of emotions with expreſſion and

[i] Cicero de Orat. lib. i. c. 5.

emphaſis

emphasis must be attentively observed, and made the guide to practice. The orator must feel the force of his own reasonings, and be alive to the beauties of his own descriptions. It is this strength, spirit, and fire, which render him a perfect master of his art, which excite sympathy in the breasts of his hearers, and animate them with his own enthusiasm. Was it not the impassioned delivery of Demosthenes, to which his rival Æschines has left such a remarkable and such an honourable testimony, that gave resistless persuasion to his speeches[k]? Was it not the indignant countenance, the animated tone, and the judicious action of Cicero, which communicated such commanding influence and powerful weight to his arguments, when he confounded the audacious Catiline? And was it not the dignified air, and the persuasive mildness of Massillon, which added to his religious instructions so much force, when he preached before the court of Louis XIV. and drew from that haughty monarch a confession of the power of sacred eloquence?

He who aspires to the reputation of a good public speaker, must make judgment the rule of his conduct; for no attainments can se-

[k] Cicero de Orat. lib. iii. sect. 213.

cure

cure praiſe or advantage without it. Even correctneſs itſelf muſt not be carried to an extreme; the flights of imagination muſt be reſtrained by diſcretion, and propriety muſt give laws to every effort. Thus will he take the ſureſt road to eminence; he will reach the ſublime, without being bombaſtic or extravagant; he will be bold, not raſh; ſerious, but not ſevere; gay, not licentious; and copious without redundance. An adherence to the proper rules of the art will be the ſafeſt guide to genius, will improve every natural endowment, and will add the advantages of experience to the gifts of nature.

The eloquence of the moderns has rarely reached the ſtandard of excellence, which was erected by the ancients. The character of each is widely different. In Greece the public ſpeaker was bold, impetuous, and ſublime. In Rome he was more declamatory, verboſe, flowery, and pathetic. Fenelon has thus ingeniouſly diſcriminated the eloquence of the two great orators of Greece and Rome. "After hearing an oration of Tully, 'How finely and eloquently has he expreſſed himſelf!' ſaid the Romans. After Demoſthenes had ſpoke, 'Let us riſe, and march againſt Philip,' ſaid the Athenians." In England the

the public ſpeaker is temperate and cool, and addreſſes himſelf more to the reaſon of his audience, than to their paſſions. There is ſtill great ſcope for the diſplay of genius in the pulpit, at the bar, and in the houſes of Parliament; and the path of fame is ſtill left open to riſing orators. The rules laid down by the ancients, as the principles involved in thoſe rules are of general utility, may be ſtudied to great advantage, although much judgment is neceſſary for their proper application; and attention muſt be paid to modern taſte and modern manners.

Many diſtinguiſhed examples of eloquence may be held up to the obſervation of the young orator; but he muſt avoid too cloſe an imitation, even of the moſt eminent. Let him ſtudy the moſt eſteemed works of his predeceſſors; let him frequently revolve, and even commit to memory, their productions, and repeat them with ſuitable voice and action [1]; and let him rather in his own compo-

[1] I have heard that the Marquis of Wharton formed his ſon, the Duke, to be one of the greateſt, and at the ſame time one of the readieſt ſpeakers that ever was in England, by making him get by heart whole Orations of Demoſthenes, and repeat them with all the graces of action and pronunciation. Monboddo, vol. iv. p. 244. In drawing up this Chapter, I acknowledge my obligations to the Encyclopedia Britannica, article *Oratory*.

 ſitions

ſitions endeavour to catch a portion of their ſpirit, than tread ſervilely in their ſteps. Demoſthenes was vehement, abrupt, energetic, and ſublime. Cicero was dignified, luminous, and copious. Chatham united the energy of the one to the elegance of the other [m]. Mansfield was perſuaſive, delightful, and inſtructive. Burke was flowery, vivid, and fluent. Let the orator ſtudy to combine in his compoſitions their united excellence. Let him not, to uſe the appoſite

[m] Demoſthenes was his great model in ſpeaking; and we are told that he tranſlated ſome of his Orations by way of exerciſe ſeveral times over.

Many deſcriptions are given of the eloquence of Lord Chatham: but of them all, whether written by Mr. Burke, Wilkes, the author of Junius, Frederic of Pruſſia, the Abbé Raynal, or Lord Cheſterfield, that written by the laſt ſtrikes me as the cleareſt, and perhaps the moſt accurate. "His eloquence was of every kind, and he excelled in the argumentative, as well as the declamatory way. But his invectives were terrible, and uttered with ſuch energy of diction, and ſuch dignity of action and countenance, that he intimidated thoſe who were the moſt willing and the leaſt able to encounter him. Their arms fell out of their hands, and they ſhrunk under the aſcendant, which his genius gained over theirs." Life of Chatham, vol. iii. p. 378, &c.

"It is a traditionary tale of his country, that almoſt in infancy the great Lord Mansfield was accuſtomed to declaim upon his native mountains the moſt celebrated ſpeeches of Cicero and Demoſthenes, and his own inimitable Tranſlations." Lives of eminent Lawyers, p. 32.

and

and beautiful illuſtration of Quintilian, reſemble the ſtream, that is carried through a channel formed by art for its courſe; but rather let him be like thoſe bold rivers, which overflow a whole valley; and where they do not find, can force a paſſage, by their own natural impetuoſity and ſtrength.

CLASS THE THIRD.

HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

The Study of Hiſtory in general.

CURIOSITY is one of the ſtrongeſt and moſt active principles of human nature. Throughout the ſucceſſive ſtages of life, it ſeeks with avidity for thoſe gratifications, which are congenial with the different faculties of the mind. The child, as ſoon as the imagination begins to open, eagerly liſtens to the tales of his nurſe: the youth, at a time of life, when the love of what is new and uncommon is quickened by ſenſibility, is enchanted by the magic of Romances and Novels: the man, whoſe mature judgment inclines him to the purſuit of truth, applies to genuine Hiſtory, which even in old age continues to be a favourite object of his attention; ſince his deſire to be acquainted with the tranſactions of others has nearly an equal

power

power over his mind, with the propenſity to relate what has happened to himſelf.

The love of fame, and a deſire to communicate information, have influenced the ingenious and the ambitious, in almoſt every age and in every nation, to leave behind them ſome memorials of their exiſtence, actions, and diſcoveries. Thus has the curioſity of mankind ſecured, by methods at firſt very rude and incomplete, and in ſucceeding times by records more improved and ſatisfactory, its favourite enjoyments.

The method of conveying accounts of remarkable tranſactions in the earlieſt ages of the world, by means of oral tradition, was very imperfect and uncertain. Songs were the only memorials of antiquity among the Germans; and their war-ſong when ruſhing to battle was always a memorial of ſome ancient hero. Poets who ſung the praiſes of deceaſed warriors at the tables of kings are often mentioned by Homer: the Scandinavians had their ſcalds, the Gauls and Germans their bards, and the ſavages of America preſerved ſimilar records of the paſt in the wild poetry of their country. To ſupply the great defects

of ſuch oral tradition, and to perpetuate their remembrance, founders of ſtates, and leaders of colonies, gave their own names to cities and kingdoms. Pillars of ſtone were raiſed, devices were fixed upon ſhields and banners, and national feſtivals and cuſtoms were eſtabliſhed to commemorate extraordinary events. From ſuch imperfect attempts to reſcue the paſt from the ravages of time and oblivion, the progreſs to written hiſtory was made ſoon after the invention of letters. The names of magiſtrates, and the recital of the moſt remarkable events, which happened during their tranſaction of public buſineſs, were accurately recorded, as we learn from the Chronicles of the kings of Iſrael, and the Tables preſerved in the capitol at Rome. Such was the commencement of annals and of a regular ſeries of chronology. In ſucceeding times, when nations became more civilized, and the various branches of literature were cultivated, private perſons employed themſelves in recording the actions of their anceſtors, and hiſtory by degrees aſſumed its proper form and character. It was at firſt like painting the rude outline of an unſkilful deſigner; but after repeated eſſays, the great maſters of the art aroſe, and produced the

harmonious light and ſhade, the glowing colours, and animated groups of a perfect picture.

With a particular view to the works of eminent hiſtorians, both ancient and modern, it may be uſeful to conſider,

I. The *Nature* of Hiſtory, and the aſſiſtance which it derives from other ſtudies.

II. The *Advantages* of a knowledge of Hiſtory.

III. The comparative merits of *ancient* and *modern* Hiſtorians.

IV. The *Qualifications requiſite to form an accompliſhed* Hiſtorian, in order to eſtabliſh a ſtandard, by which to meaſure the merits of Hiſtorians in general.

I. Hiſtory, in the general ſenſe of the word, ſignifies a true relation of facts and events; or, conſidered in a moral point of view, it is example, which ſupplies the place of experience. The province of hiſtory is ſo extenſive, that it is connected with every branch of knowledge; and ſo various and abundant are its ſtores, that all arts, ſciences, and profeſſions are indebted to it for many of the

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materials and principles, upon which they depend. It opens the wideſt proſpect to the eyes of mankind in the ſpacious fields of literature, and is one of the moſt pleaſing and important objects of ſtudy, to which the mind can be directed.

To draw the line of proper diſtinction between authentic and fabulous hiſtory is the firſt object of the diſcerning reader. Let him not burthen his memory with events that ought perhaps to paſs for fables; let him not fatigue his attention with the progreſs of empires, or the ſucceſſion of kings, which are thrown back into the remoteſt ages. He will find that little dependence is to be placed upon the relations of thoſe affairs in the Pagan world, which preceded the invention of letters, and were built upon mere oral tradition. Let him leave the dynaſties of the Egyptian kings, the expeditions of Seſoſtris, Bacchus an Jaſon, and the exploits of Hercules and Theſeus, for poets to embelliſh, or chronologiſts to arrange. The fabulous accounts of theſe heroes of antiquity may remind him of the ſandy deſarts, lofty mountains, and frozen oceans, which are laid down in the maps of the ancient geographers, to con-

conceal their ignorance of diſtant countries. Let him haſten to firm ground, where he may ſafely ſtand, and behold the ſtriking events, and memorable actions, which the light of authentic records diſplays to his view. They alone are amply ſufficient to enrich his memory, and to point out to him well-atteſted examples of all that is magnanimous, as well as all that is vile;—of all that debaſes, and all that ennobles mankind.

Hiſtory, conſidered with reſpect to the nature of its ſubjects, may be divided into *general* and *particular*; and with reſpect to time, into *ancient* and *modern*. Ancient hiſtory commences with the creation, and extends to the reign of Charlemagne, in the year of our Lord 800. Modern hiſtory beginning with that period reaches down to the preſent times. General hiſtory relates to nations and public affairs, and may be ſubdivided into *ſacred*, *eccleſiaſtical*, and *profane*. Biography, memoirs, and letters, conſtitute particular hiſtory. *Statiſtics* refer to the preſent condition of nations. *Geography* and *chronology* are important aids, and give order, regularity, and clearneſs to them all.

For information upon the ſubject of ſacred hiſtory

hiſtory the ſtudent muſt reſort to the holy Bible, to Joſephus, and to the Annals of Archbiſhop Uſher.

The affairs of the Chriſtian Church, comprehending the lives, characters, and conduct of thoſe who have maintained a pure and apoſtolical faith, as well as of ſuch ſectariſts as have deviated from it, are compriſed in *Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory*. It deſcribes the nature of religious eſtabliſhments, and diſplays the various opinions of Chriſtians upon the moſt important of all ſubjects. Here we trace the progreſs of Chriſtianity from obſcurity and oppreſſion, to glory and dominion; and, after a long ſeries of ſuperſtition and error, we ſee it reſume its primitive character in the Reformation of the ſixteenth century. This important ſubject has exerciſed the diligence and diſplayed the learning of many eminent writers of various ages: but the reader of general hiſtory may find ſufficient gratification for his curioſity in the works of Euſebius, Moſheim, Jortin, and Gregory.

From the people of the ancient world we firſt ſelect the *Jews*, as the particular objects of our attention. They were favoured with the knowledge of the one true God. Their

hiſtory

history carries us back to the most remote antiquity; and its importance is increased in the greatest degree by its connexion with the Christian Revelation.

The next branch of general history is that of *Ancient Greece*. It presents a nation of heroes, philosophers, poets, orators, historians, and artists, who spoke the most noble language, which ever graced the tongue of man, and who have been the guides and the instructors of all succeeding nations in arts, sciences, and philosophy. Greece was the source of light, that has irradiated a great part of the world.

The *Romans* in the order of excellence, as well as of time, followed the Grecians: their military talents were displayed in a long succession of conquests and triumphs in every part of the ancient world. The monuments of their genius, which the ravages of time have spared, render them next to the Greeks the boast of history, and the glory of mankind.

The *History of England* has the strongest claims to our attention. It abounds with such events and transactions, and displays

ſuch characters and actions, as it is our duty and our intereſt to be acquainted with; and we are attracted to a peruſal of its eventful records by the ties of patriotiſm and a congeniality of manners.

From *Modern hiſtory* in general we ſelect thoſe parts, which relate to the moſt important tranſactions and events, particularly adverting to thoſe diſcoveries and inſtitutions, which diſtinguiſh it from ancient times, and have contributed eſſentially to the preſent ſtate of opinions and manners.

There are certain foreign nations, which, by the extent of their dominions, their civil polity, or their connexion with our own country, may excite our curioſity to learn their former ſtate: but it will not anſwer any important purpoſe to dwell, for inſtance, upon the affairs of France under the Merovingian, or Carlovinian, families; or on the ſtate of Germany before the reign of Charles V. Let not the ſcholar waſte too much time, which may be more profitably employed in other ſtudies, in poring over the works of Thuanus, Mariana, and Froiſſart; or the numerous volumes of the Univerſal Hiſtory.

With reſpect indeed to foreign nations, the objects of his moſt uſeful attention are the actual power, the nature of their preſent governments, the ſtate of civilization, ſciences, and arts, their natural and artificial advantages, their population, produce, commerce, and relative importance in the ſcale of political greatneſs. This conſtitutes a branch of ſtudy, which has been of late years much cultivated by the Germans, and is diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Statiſtics*. Travellers and ſtateſmen muſt not claim this ſtudy as their own excluſive province, ſince it will be found extremely uſeful to every Engliſh gentleman, and will qualify him to form a juſt eſtimate of the relative condition, power, and importance of his own country.

Biography is a branch of hiſtory, which in point of importance and moral utility ranks as high as any. The biographer by his accurate reſearches ſupplies the deficiencies of the hiſtorian. What the latter gives us only in outlines and ſketches, the former preſents in more complete and highly finiſhed portraits. Their province does not merely extend to thoſe who have acted upon the great theatre of the world, as ſovereigns, ſtateſmen, and warriors; but to all who have improved human

human life by their uſeful diſcoveries, adorned it by their works of genius, and edified mankind by their examples. With what pleaſure do we ſelect a Bacon, a Boyle, a Newton, an Addiſon, a Locke, a Radcliffe, a Howard, and a Hanway, from the multitudes that ſurround them, and become acquainted with their particular character and conduct! To contemplate ſuch men, not inflamed by vain ambition, or courting empty popularity, but ſeeking retirement, and giving dignity to the walks of private life by the efforts of genius, and the exertions of philanthropy, is a high gratification to the mind, and inſpires it with an admiration and a love of thoſe virtues, which come within the reach of general imitation.

" To find that great lengths have actually been gone in learning and virtue, that high degrees of perfection have actually been attained by men like ourſelves, intangled among the infirmities, the temptations, the oppoſition from wicked men, and the other various evils of life; how does this ſhow us to ourſelves as utterly inexcuſable, if we do not endeavour to reach the heights we know have been gained by others of our fellow-creatures? Biography ſets before us the whole character

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of a perſon, who has made himſelf eminent either by his virtues or his vices; ſhews us how he came firſt to take a right or a wrong turn, the proſpects which invited him to aſpire to higher degrees of glory, or the deluſions which miſled him from his virtue and his peace; the circumſtances which raiſed him to true greatneſs, or the rocks on which he ſplit, and ſunk to infamy. And how can we more effectually, or in a more entertaining manner, learn the important leſſon, what we ought to purſue, and what to avoid[a]?"

No ſpecies of writing gives a more perfect inſight into the minds of men, than their *Letters*. In the letters of perſons of diſtinction, we expect the juſtneſs of obſervation, which belongs to hiſtory, and the eaſe and good humour of elegant converſation. They place us in the ſituation of correſpondents, and we ſeem honoured by the confidence of the great and good, the witty and the gay of various ages and countries. We obſerve them as they

[a] Burgh's Dignity of Human Nature, p. 167. Warton's Preface to the Life of Sir T. Pope. Blair's Lectures, v. iii. p. 55, &c. "It is a thing to be wiſhed, that every one would ſtudy the life of ſome great man diſtinguiſhed by employs, to which himſelf may be deſtined by Providence." Du Freſnoy, tom. i. p. 43.

they thought in their retired moments, when, withdrawn from the buſtle of the world, they gave free ſcope to their unreſtrained opinions, and poured them without reſerve into the boſoms of their friends. We may remark the immediate effects produced by good or bad fortune, and may catch the ſpirit of their virtues immediately from themſelves. Here wit, humour, and genius, have indulged their natural ſallies, and adorned the common occurrences of life in the moſt pleaſing dreſs. Among the numerous inſtances, which might be ſelected of epiſtolary excellence, we diſtinguiſh the Letters of Cicero, which diſplay the ſentiments of a vigorous mind, and give an inſight into the eminent characters of his eventful times. Pliny, in Epiſtles remarkable for neatneſs and preciſion both of thought and ſtyle, expreſſes the dictates of a cultivated and generous mind. If we turn our attention to the epiſtolary literature of our own country, we ſhall find that the piety and the affection of Lady Ruſſel, the quaintneſs and pleaſantry of Howel, the manlineſs and political ſagacity of Strafford, the philoſophical exactneſs and cool judgment of Locke, the ſimplicity of Rundle, the moraliſing vein of Johnſon, and the taſte and elegance of Gray, mark their reſpective letters

ters with the ſtrongeſt characters of originality, and give us the moſt pleaſing pictures of their minds. We naturally wiſh to know all we can of ſuch perſons, and feel an increaſing intereſt in their other productions; for we prize thoſe writers the moſt, who combine the charms of entertainment and pleaſure with the leſſons of inſtruction.

Hiſtory derives conſiderable aid from collateral ſtudies, which contribute to render its proſpects accurate, diſtinct, and extenſive. The ſciences of *Geography* and *Chronology* are abſolutely neceſſary to give it preciſion and perſpicuity. Without a knowledge of the former, no reader can have a clear idea of the ſcene, where any occurrence takes place; but is liable to the groſſeſt miſtakes by confounding one part of the world with another. He cannot underſtand the relative ſituations of countries, nor aſcertain their magnitude, climate, ſoil, or productions. To ſolve problems upon the globe, and to be acquainted with its artificial diviſions, the various continents, oceans, and iſlands, with all other diſtinctions of land and water, are therefore very requiſite attainments. Geography is equally applicable to modern as to ancient hiſto-

hiſtory, and introduces the pleaſing combination of the old and preſent names of different places, and the characters and manners of the different inhabitants. It aſſiſts the memory by the various aſſociations of ideas, with which it furniſhes the mind; and the proſpect of a country preſented by a map, or a globe, recals the memorable tranſactions, which have been performed in it, and revives the recollection of its illuſtrious men.

Perſons in various ſituations of life are intereſted in the ſtudy of geography, and may reap advantage from its cultivation. While it conſtitutes a branch of knowledge eſſentially neceſſary for the traveller, the merchant, and the ſailor, it furniſhes abundant ſtores of inveſtigation to the naturaliſt and the philoſopher. It is not only requiſite for every reader of hiſtory, but for every one who peruſes the daily accounts of the events, which are taking place in various parts of the world. It has long been conſidered as a material part of a polite education: at preſent indeed it is more particularly proper that it ſhould be ſo, as the Britiſh commerce and colonies extend our connexions to ſo many different countries; and as ſo many voyages of

discovery have of late years been made. These circumstances must naturally excite our curiosity, and operate as a strong inducement to the study of that science, which gives us an accurate knowledge of the soils, productions, situations, customs, and inhabitants of the terraqueous globe.

Without Chronology, which teaches the artificial divisions of time, we have no standard, by which the rise and fall of empires, the length of lives, or the dates of remarkable occurrences can be measured. Nor can we without this assistance divide time into those parts, which present a connected chain of events, in a regular and orderly series. Without proper attention to the divisions of time, we shall be apt to confound the degenerate Persians conquered under Alexander, with their warlike ancestors victorious under Cyrus; and we may erroneously conclude that the states of Greece were as independent under the dominion of Philip, as when they enjoyed their liberty during the triumphs of Themistocles. We shall ignorantly admit as an historical fact the pleasing fiction of the Mantuan Bard, when he makes Dido contemporary with Æneas; and not detect a similar anachronism of Shakespeare, when he in-

introduces a quotation from Ariſtotle into a ſpeech of Hector.

Geography and Chronology are with the greateſt propriety called the eyes of hiſtory; becauſe this metaphor expreſſes better than any other how effectually they aſſiſt us as the proper inſtruments to diſcern the various actions and revolutions of mankind.

There are other aſſiſtances, by which the ſtudy of hiſtory may be conſiderably promoted, and the events which it records may be very pleaſingly illuſtrated. Coins and medals[b], inſcriptions[c], gems, and ſtatues not only ſhew us the progreſs of ancient arts, but likewiſe aſcertain many curious particulars reſpecting characters, inſtruments, buildings, and ceremonies. Coins and medals indeed are particularly ſerviceable in that reſpect. The repreſentation of ſo many events is delineated upon them, that they illuſtrate ſeveral paſſages in ancient writers, and confirm facts that are doubtful. Sometimes they are

[a] Du Freſnoy, vol. i. p. 241.

[b] The Comparative Uſe of Medals and Inſcriptions by the learned Scipio Maffæi may be found in Du Freſnoy's new Method of ſtudying Hiſtory, vol. i. p. 323.

not only the aſſiſtants but the ſubſtitutes of hiſtory. Gibbon remarks, that if all the hiſtorians of that period were loſt, medals, inſcriptions, and other monuments, would be ſufficient to record the travels of the emperor Hadrian. Coins are to general hiſtory, what miniatures are to hiſtorical pictures; when arranged in exact order, they anſwer the purpoſe of a chronological epitome, and convey ſimilar information, with the additional advantage of a more lively and pictureſque manner of communicating it.

But the *Laws* of a country are more intimately connected with its hiſtory, and indeed, more accurately ſpeaking, conſtitute an eſſential part of it. They ſhew the genius of a people, illuſtrate their manners, and enable us to trace their progreſs from rude independence to due ſubordination and proper government. The hiſtorians of antiquity, indeed, taking it for granted that the laws of their reſpective countries would be as well known to others as to themſelves, have not paid ſufficient attention to this ſubject. From the turbulent ſcenes of public affairs, from battles and the conflicts of contending factions, we can derive little knowledge of the internal ſtate of manners and cuſtoms. This

infor-

information an acquaintance with juriſprudence is calculated to ſupply; and even from the ancient laws, extremely conciſe as they are, we may infer with a great degree of probability, what the ſtate of a country was, in any particular reſpect, when a new law was enacted. The remedy recommended clearly points out the nature of the diſeaſe. For inſtance, the encroachments of luxury in Rome may be marked by the Oppian law, which prohibited the Roman ladies from wearing ornaments to their dreſs, which exceeded the value of an ounce of gold; and by a decree of the Senate obtained by Cornelius, which limited to a particular ſum the expence of funerals.

The Advantages of a Knowledge of Hiſtory.

If we conſider the knowledge of hiſtory with regard to its application, we ſhall find that it is eminently uſeful to us in three reſpects, viz. as it appears in a *moral*, a *political*, and a *religious* point of view.

In a moral point of view—it is beneficial to mankind at large, as the guide of their conduct. In a political—as it ſuggeſts uſeful expedients to thoſe who exerciſe the public offices of the ſtate, whether they are kings, mini-

ministers, or magistrates; or as it enables us to form, by comparison with those who have gone before them, a just estimate of their merits. In a religious—as it teaches us to regard the Supreme Being as the governor of the universe, and the sovereign disposer of all events.

The faculties of the soul are improved by exercise; and nothing is more proper to enlarge, to quicken, and to refine them, than a survey of the conduct of mankind. History supplies us with a detail of facts, and submits them to our examination before we are called into active life. By observation and reflection upon others we begin an early acquaintance with mankind, extend our views of the moral world, and are enabled to acquire such a habit of discernment, and correctness of judgment, as others obtain only by experience. We thus by anticipation are conversant with the busy scenes of the world; by revolving the lives of sages and heroes, we exercise our virtues in a review, and prepare them for approaching action. We learn the motives, the opinions, and the passions of the men who have lived before us; and the fruit of that study is a more perfect knowledge of our-

ourſelves, and a correction of our failings by their examples. At the ſame time we form thoſe general principles of conduct, which muſt neceſſarily be true and commendable, becauſe they are founded upon the immutable decrees of right reaſon, and are ſanctioned by the uniform authority and practice of the wiſe and good of all ages.

Our own experience is imperfect, but the examples of ancient times are complete. Actual obſervation gives only a partial knowledge of mankind; great events and important tranſactions open very ſlowly upon us; and the ſhortneſs of human life enables us only to ſee detached parts of them. We are not placed at a proper diſtance to judge rightly of their real nature and magnitude. Heated by our paſſions, hurried on by precipitation, and miſled by intereſt and prejudice, we view the affairs of the preſent times through an obſcure and a partial medium, and frequently form very wrong opinions of them. On the contrary, the examples of hiſtory are diſtinct and clear, they are preſented to us at full length, and we can contemplate them in their origin, progreſs, and termination. We conſider them at our leiſure, and decide upon the

the actions of those, who are removed by time to a great distance from us, with a cool and dispassionate judgment.

Experience and the knowledge of history reflect mutual light upon each other, and afford each other mutual assistance. Without the former, no one can act with address and dexterity. Without the latter, no one can add to the natural resources of his own mind a knowledge of those precepts and examples, which have tended to form the character and promote the glory of eminent men. Scipio Africanus employed many of his leisure hours in a diligent perusal of the works of Xenophon; and the Commentaries of Cæsar improved the military talents of the illustrious Eugene [d].

[d] And verilie they bee fewest in number, that bee happie or wise by unlearned experience. And looke well upon the former life of those fewe, whether your example be old or young, who without learning have gathered, by long experience, a little wisdome and some happiness; and when you doe consider what mischiefe they have committed, what daungers they have escaped (and twentie for one doe perish in the adventure) then think well with yourselfe, whether ye would, that your own sonne should cum to wisdome and happiness by the way of such experience or no." ASCHAM's Schoolmaster.

Hiſtory contributes to diveſt us of many unreaſonable prejudices, by enlarging our acquaintance with the world. It ſets us at liberty from that blind partiality to our native country, which is the ſure mark of a contracted mind, when due merit is not allowed to any other. It may be ſerviceable either as the aſſiſtant of Foreign Travel, or as its ſubſtitute, by removing an averſion to nations and inſtitutions different from our own. It rectifies our opinions with reſpect to ancient and modern times, and thus enables us to form a juſt eſtimate of mankind in all countries, as well as in all ages.

This ſtudy likewiſe tends to ſtrengthen our abhorrence of vice; and creates a reliſh for true greatneſs and ſolid glory. We ſee the hero and the philoſopher repreſented in their proper colours; and as magnanimity, honour, integrity, and generoſity, when diſplayed in illuſtrious inſtances, naturally make a favourable impreſſion on our minds, our attachment to them is gradually formed. The fire of enthuſiaſm and of virtuous emulation is lighted, and we long to practiſe what we have been inſtructed to approve.

Hiſtory likewiſe is the foundation, upon which

which is built the true ſcience of government. It is the proper ſchool for princes, politicians, and legiſlators. They need not have recourſe for inſtruction to the Republic of Plato, the Utopia of More, or the Oceana of Harrington. In their deliberations upon ſtate affairs they can form no ſafer plans for the guidance of their conduct, than from the contemplation of the paſt. In the records of various ſtates they may obſerve by what means national happineſs has been ſucceſsfully purſued, and public liberty has been firmly eſtabliſhed: in what manner laws have anſwered the ends of their inſtitution in the reformation of manners, and the promotion of the general good; and thence they may draw ſuch concluſions as may be moſt advantageous in the regulation of the affairs of their own country [e].

In the volumes of hiſtory likewiſe we ſee the moſt deceitful and crafty ſtripped of the diſguiſe of artifice and diſſimulation, their deſigns developed, and their ſtratagems ex-

[e] Hoc illud eſt præcipue in cognitione rerum ſalubre et frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in illuſtri poſita monumento intueri; inde tibi tuæque reipublicæ quod imitere, capias; inde fœdum inceptu, fœdum exitu quod vites. Liv.

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posed. By the fall of the great and powerful into a state of disgrace and indigence, as well as by the revolutions of empires, we are not so liable to be astonished at the events, which pass before our own eyes. The reverses of fortune so frequently recorded in the pages of former times convince us of the mutability of worldly affairs, and the precariousness of all human grandeur.

The portraits, busts, and statues of the hero, the legislator, the patriot, and the philosopher, form a most edifying school for the ingenuous mind. The Roman youth, accustomed to view the images of their illustrious ancestors decorated with the emblems of the highest offices of the state, and crowned with the wreaths of victory, were fired with the love of glory, and strove to emulate their exploits. History in a similar manner, by transmitting the spirit of excellence from one mind to another, excites a desire for whatever is fair and good, and engages even the passions on the side of the judgment. It fixes the strongest and most lasting impressions upon the mind, sanctions the arguments of reason, and gives spirit and energy to the lessons of morality. It is indeed that lively philosophy, which, laying aside the formality of

of rules, performs the more welcome and effectual office of teaching by example.

How tame and spiritless are the precepts of wisdom, even when taught by a Socrates or a Plato, if compared with the more energetic and animated beauties of virtue, exemplified in the actions of an Aristides, or a Phocion! To the former we only give the cold assent of the judgment; of the latter we express our admiration with rapture; they call forth our encomiums, they excite the spirit of emulation, and we are eager to shew by our conduct the great influence which they have gained over our hearts.

But what is this homage, which is paid almost involuntarily to such great and illustrious examples? It is undoubtedly the voice of nature, and the suggestion of reason pure and uncorrupted by the bad practices of the world. It is the decision of a correct judgment, and the proof of a genuine taste for true greatness and solid glory. In order therefore to form a virtuous character, and to be distinguished for the most laudable actions, it is an object of the first concern to be ever attentive to this voice, and to conform to its wise and friendly admonitions.

While hiſtory holds up to the view inſtances of eminent virtues and ſplendid actions, ſhe calls not the ſtudent to a ſervile or cloſe imitation of her examples; for thus might he unintentionally be led to error and miſconduct. No two men were ever preciſely the ſame in moral or intellectual qualities, or in ſituations exactly ſimilar; and therefore no one can with ſafety conclude, that the ſame conduct could in all reſpects be prudent for him, which his predeceſſor has followed. Expedients ſpringing from our own minds are formed with more clearneſs, and executed with more ſpirit, than thoſe which are derived from the imitation of others. While the imitator is revolving the precedents of paſt times, and minutely examining them with reference to his own caſe, he may ſuffer the favourable opportunity for action to eſcape him, and may be undone for ever;—or, ſuppoſing he takes any particular example for his guide, from a want of accurate diſcrimination, he may be betrayed into ſome fatal error. The acute and the diſcerning will not fail to combine originality of plan with the guidance of precedent; they will make every proper allowance for the various diſpoſitions and manners of the times; they will inſtantly perceive where cir-

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cumſtances differ or agree; and will adopt only ſo much of the example, as is exactly proportioned to the exigency of their own affairs.

Hiſtory riſes to the higheſt degree of importance, and attains the full dignity of its character, by fixing our attention upon the conduct of divine Providence in the moral government of the world. It is clear to every one, who takes the moſt ſuperficial view of the paſt, that great events have often been effected by trifling means; that the conſequences of actions have been much more extenſive, more fatal or calamitous, than were originally deſigned by the agents themſelves; that the deſigns of Providence have been brought about by the caprice of human tempers, or the violence of human paſſions; and that force, craft, and cruelty have always met with their juſt, though ſometimes protracted puniſhment[f]. The reſult of actions has been widely different from the end pro-

[f] For ſome remarkable inſtances ſee Robertſon's Charles V. c. 5. book 10. at the end, and the Preface to Sir W. Raleigh's Hiſtory of the World; where numerous examples are taken from the early parts of the Engliſh Hiſtory.

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poſed by thoſe who planned them; and great revolutions have been effected contrary to the intention of the perſons, who were the chief inſtruments of them. Such extraordinary diſcoveries draw us much nearer, and give us a much better inſight into the operations of the Deity, than thoſe occurrences, in which the cauſes are more equal to the effects; as is the caſe with the common affairs of life. Thus hiſtory becomes the handmaid of religion, and opens to us the moſt wonderful proſpects of the divine interpoſition in the government of the world.

Excluſive of the general uſes of hiſtory, there is a particular application of it, which every one naturally makes to his own purſuits, his own age, and his own habits of thinking. The politician ſearches the records of paſt ages for the riſe and fall of ſtates, the meaſures which advanced their greatneſs, and the cauſes which precipitated them into ruin. The ſoldier looks for military achievements, the conduct of generals, and the diſcipline of armies. Cauſe and effect engage the attention of the philoſopher; and the man of ſcience is intereſted by the deſcription of the phenomena of nature. The antiquarian ſtudies the ancient laws, cuſtoms, and dreſſes, and

and other peculiarities of nations. The man who is in the decline of life, is gratified with remarking in the ſame book thoſe ſentiments and actions, which he diſregarded in his youth; and the habits of thinking, which he has formed at one particular period of life, induce him to ſearch for different ſources of entertainment and inſtruction at another. Thus every perſon is influenced by his peculiar taſte: when he conſults the volumes of hiſtory, he diſcovers ſomething in them to ſuit the complexion of his own mind; and, from a natural partiality to his own purſuits, may be inclined to think, that the hiſtorian wrote only for his ſole uſe and entertainment.

Readers, however, of every age and deſcription, may find in hiſtory ample materials for improving the judgment, by tracing the due connexion that ſubſiſts between cauſes and effects. They ought not to be ſatisfied with the recital of events alone, but endeavour to inveſtigate the circumſtances which combined either to produce, to haſten, or to retard them; as well as the manner of their operation, and the degree of their influence.

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Hiſtorians, indeed, ſometimes expoſe themſelves to cenſure from too great a refinement of conjecture. They aſſign ſo many motives for the conduct of their heroes, that it is highly improbable all of them ſhould have operated. Of this there are abundant inſtances in Tacitus, Thuanus, and Hume. The reader, however, derives an advantage from the circumſtance; for although it is not reaſonable to conclude, that all ſuch motives had the influence attributed to them; yet he is left at liberty to chooſe that which he thinks moſt probable to have produced the meaſure in queſtion.

In whatever abſtruſeneſs the ſcience of politics may be ſuppoſed to be involved, it is probable, that the motives which lead to the performance of many remarkable actions do not lie very deep in the human mind. The actions themſelves may indeed dazzle by their ſplendour, or ſurpriſe by their novelty; but ſtill they might probably be the reſult of no greater reach of capacity, than that which is exerted in the management of common concerns. There is no ſtate of public affairs, to which the operation of the paſſions and the virtues, the vices, the calls of public or pri-

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vate intereſt, and the love of glory, will not apply; and into theſe may be fairly reſolved the conduct of monarchs, ſtateſmen, and warriors.

CHAPTER II.

The comparative merits of ancient and modern Hiſtorians.

As there is no ſpecies of compoſition, to which the faculties of the mind have been more ſtrenuouſly bent, or more laudably directed in various ages of the world, and from which more uſeful information may be derived, than hiſtory; it is doubtleſs very intereſting to conſider, and to determine the comparative merits of ancient and modern hiſtorians. With regard to the nature of their ſubjects, as the purſuits of mankind are now ſo much diverſified, modern writers have great advantages over the ancient. The prevailing employment of ancient times was war; the pages of the hiſtorians are therefore filled with battles and ſieges, which from the age of Homer to the revival of learning in Europe weary our attention by uniformity of ſubject. A more particular regard has in ſubſequent ages been paid to laws, cuſtoms, commerce, religion, and government; and every circumſtance relative to the conduct of individuals, tending in any degree to the de-

velopement of the genius of a people, is ſcrutinized and diſcuſſed. It is not uſual for modern hiſtorians to introduce thoſe formal harangues of generals in the field, or of ſtateſmen in the ſenate, which conſtitute ſo large a ſhare of the works of antiquity. However acute they may be in point of argument, appropriate as to character, or dramatic as to effect, they contradict our notions of probability, and only ſerve, by the interpoſition of the ſuppoſed ſpeaker, to diſplay the eloquence of the author. The ſpeeches of Cæſar in his Commentaries, and thoſe which Dion Caſſius compoſed for him, are very different in circumſtances and arguments. Diodorus Siculus and Trogus Pompeius cenſured the introduction of ſpeeches, particularly in Livy and Salluſt. Of all that the ancients have left us, none approach ſo nearly to nature and probability as thoſe of the Old Teſtament and Herodotus. The moderns have a wider range of political views; and, from their more extenſive knowledge of various countries, they are better acquainted with the nature of government, and the comparative ſtate of man.

Ever ſince the eſtabliſhment of the regular and general conveyance of letters by poſts, chan-

channels of eaſy and expeditious information have been opened; and the intercourſe between one country and another has been more frequent, in conſequence of travelling being rendered ſafe, commodious, and expeditious. The wide diffuſion of literature likewiſe, extending more and more ſince the revival of learning, has multiplied authentic documents; valuable papers are often depoſited in public libraries, where they are acceſſible to the curious and inquiſitive; or, if preſerved by individuals, they are ſoon diſcovered by the active ſpirit of inquiry, and communicated to the world.

An abundance of materials for Hiſtory, however, is not the only requiſite to inform the mind, or ſecure the approbation of the reader. One great fault of the modern hiſtorians is prolixity. The volumes of Thuanus, Rapin, and Carte, are calculated to fatigue the moſt vigilant eye, and oppreſs the powers of the moſt retentive memory. Such writers exhauſt attention by magnifying trifles into importance, and diffuſe a coldneſs over their works by a minute detail of unintereſting affairs, or unimportant remarks. Hence the reader, unleſs he wiſhes to conſult the author upon ſome particular ſubject,

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turns over many a page with indifference, and finally quits the hiſtorian with diſguſt.

The contraſt with the ancients in this reſpect is remarkably ſtriking. There is a vigour of thought, and a rapidity of tranſition in their writings, in compariſon with which the moderns appear tame and inſipid. The ancients draw characters, and deſcribe events, with a few maſterly ſtrokes, and paint in ſuch glowing colours of language, that they ſeize the attention at once, and captivate the mind. Their conciſeneſs gives them great advantage, and tends to preſerve the intereſt excited by their deſcriptions. All is animated and forcible; the repreſentations are taken immediately from recent fact; the portraits of human nature are drawn from the life; and the buſy ſcene of action, the tumults of war, and the reverſes of fortune, are placed immediately before our eyes. They write as if they came immediately from the field of battle, or the deliberations of the council. The ſituation of many of the ancients was particularly favourable to this lively ſpecies of compoſition; for Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Cæſar, Salluſt, and Tacitus, were actors in many of the important ſcenes they portray, and write under the in-

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fluence of the deepest impressions of reality and experience.

If however we read with a view to our immediate improvement, the modern historian claims our more particular regard. He describes actions and events, which have a necessary connexion with the times in which we live, and which have an immediate influence upon the government and constitution of our country. The ancients may astonish us by relating those sudden revolutions, which transferred empires by a single battle: but the moderns shew us more of the power and progress of the mind, display more fully the causes and consequences of great events, and edify us by examples more congenial with our peculiar habits and manners; and which come more within the reach of our imitation.

The Qualifications of an accomplished Historian.

In order to erect a standard by which to measure the merits of historians, let us form to our minds one of the greatest characters which can adorn the literature of a country, and endeavour to point out the qualifications, by which an accomplished historian ought to be distinguished.

The accomplished historian chooses a subject adapted to his talents and situation. He is most fortunate, when his stores of knowledge are supplied by experience and his own observation; as was the case with some of the best writers of antiquity, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Cæsar, and Tacitus; and in modern times Sully and Clarendon. Or if he has not been himself an agent in the transactions he records, he has recourse to the purest sources of information. Although it is impossible always to select such a subject as admits of strict unity of design; yet he is convinced that the argument is most noble and most interesting, when he can preserve, without distracting the attention of the reader by desultory digressions, a close connexion of all the parts, and in the detail of which he can proceed by a regular gradation of events to some important and sublime conclusion. This historical unity of subject may be best illustrated by the Retreat of the ten thousand by Xenophon, and the Roman History of Livy. The action is not from the beginning interrupted by extraneous subjects, but ascends from one incident to another, till the principal point is reached. Impressed with a deep sense of his duty, he pays the most sacred regard to truth; and his diligence in ascertaining facts

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is equal to his accuracy in ſtating them. As far as the infirmities of human nature will allow, he is diveſted of the ſtubbornneſs of prejudice, the violence of paſſion, and the predilection of party. He is convinced that the ornaments and graces of compoſition may properly be employed to embelliſh truth, but that no embelliſhments can compenſate for wilful miſrepreſentation. He guards againſt the flights and the deluſions of imagination, and is therefore careful not to convert hiſtory into romance, or merely adorn his ſubject with the arguments of philoſophical diſſertation, or the pomp of figurative ſtyle. He carefully diſtinguiſhes where he ought to be conciſe or diffuſe, what topics require to be ſtated in plain language, and what are capable of the ornaments of diction. His fondneſs for his work infuſes vigour into his conceptions, and the delicacy of his taſte gives elegance to his ſtyle, and purity to his ſentiments. He is not ſatisfied with taking a ſuperficial view of affairs, but with deep and acute penetration inveſtigates their proximate and remote cauſes, ſeparates them from the diſguiſes under which they are concealed, and deſcends to the true motives of conduct[g].

[g] It will doubtleſs occur to many of my readers, that when I made theſe obſervations, I had Gibbon in view.

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He breaks through the obſtacles that ſtop the progreſs of vulgar intellect; and produces thoſe thoughts and reflexions, in which truth, penetration, and novelty are blended with peculiar ſkill, and ſtrike with certain effect. He diſtinguiſhes from the ſurrounding crowd the examples of eminent talents and virtues, and preſents their pictures either completely finiſhed, or marked by a few bold and expreſſive outlines. He ſelects ſuch circumſtances of their domeſtic, as well as public conduct, as will give the cleareſt inſight into their tempers and manners. In his developement of characters, he regards the MORAL tendency of hiſtory, which is its nobleſt and moſt valuable end. He neither blackens his characters with the aſperſions of malevolence, chaſtiſes them with unjuſt ſatire, nor heightens their luſtre with the varniſh of

It would lead me into too prolix a detail, if I were to point out how much he has betrayed his truſt, and deſerted the province of a good and fair hiſtorian. My readers are referred to an excellent pamphlet by Dr. Whitaker, in which the incorrect language, contradictions, digreſſions, obſcurities, abſurdities, and violations of decorum of this infidel hiſtorian are ſtated with great clearneſs. See likewiſe a very able Letter to Lord Sheffield, 1796; and the Bampton Lectures of 1790, 2d edition; where I think I have completely expoſed one of the moſt inſidious attacks, that were ever made upon the evidences of Chriſtianity.

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adulation. If he feels any bias upon his mind, it is that of a true philanthropiſt; he is inclined to draw a veil over the failings of human nature, and not expoſe every vice and folly to the public. He diveſts himſelf as much as poſſible of local prejudices, conſiders himſelf as a citizen of the world, and weighs all characters of his own or foreign countries in the balance of impartial juſtice [h]. As it is his grand object to teach by example, he either makes his remarks with brevity, or leaves his reader to form his own judgment from the clear and accurate ſtatement of facts, which he preſents to his mind.

Uſeleſs however will prove his labour, and ineffectual his ſkill, in tracing events and actions back to their cauſes, or in preſerving due order and connexion in his work, unleſs

[h] "Montaigne pretends, but he exaggerates a little, that Guicciardini no where aſcribes any one action to a virtuous, but every one to a vicious principle. Something like this has been reproached to Tacitus. Read Plutarch's comparifons, in what language you pleaſe; you will perceive that they were made by a Greek." Bolingbroke, p. 111.

"If Thucydides had not told us he was an Athenian, it would be difficult to diſcover his country. He ſays nothing in commendation of his countrymen that their actions will not juſtify; and ſhews no marks of reſentment againſt them for having baniſhed him."

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he can inſpire his writings with animation, and excite the intereſt of his readers. For this moſt important purpoſe he diſplays the ſoundneſs of his judgment, the boldneſs of his genius, and the correctneſs of his taſte. He is cautious in his choice of ſuch circumſtances as will pleaſe and ſtrike the mind; and, like a ſkilful poet or painter, he ſtudies the effect of ſelection, combination, and contraſt. He perceives that by this road the ancient hiſtorians were led to fame: he imitates their powers of lively deſcription, and, as often as a proper opportunity will admit, paints the ſcene of action with a rapid pencil dipped in the moſt glowing colours, delineates the lively portraits of the actors, and charms the imagination and excites the ſympathy of every judicious reader. In ſhort, the accompliſhed hiſtorian is awake to the intereſts of virtue, and is influenced by ſenſibility, and warmed by a proper regard for liberty and the happineſs of mankind. Theſe principles give energy to his conceptions, and perſeverance to his induſtry. He is beſt qualified to write with true dignity, when he has worked up his mind to a juſt elevation of thought, by reflecting, that it is his glorious and honourable province to addreſs himſelf to all poliſhed nations through the ſucceeding ages of the world.

world. And he will be kept ſteady to the cauſe of juſtice, when he conſiders himſelf as an impartial witneſs, who is bound by his duty to ſtand before the tribunal of poſterity, and is there liable to be arraigned for every offence againſt the majeſty of truth [i].

By theſe laws, which may be conſidered as ſome of the principal rules of hiſtory, every hiſtorian may be tried. They furniſh an equal ſtandard to direct the writer, and determine the judgment of the reader.

It is the duty of fair criticiſm to eſtimate the merits of writers at their juſt value. If therefore we ſeek for thoſe hiſtorians who approach neareſt to this ſtandard, by excelling in that particular department which each has undertaken, we ought to ſelect from the Greek writers, THUCYDIDES and POLYBIUS; from the Latin, LIVY and TACITUS; and from thoſe of Great Britain, CLARENDON, ROBERTSON, and HENRY. Their celebrated productions are marked by ſtrong and lively deſcription,

[i] Μονη θυτεον τῃ αληθειᾳ, ει τις ἱστοριαν γραψων ιοι, των δε αλλων ἁπαντων αμελητεον αυτῳ· και ὁλως πηχυς εις και μετρον ακριβες, αποβλεπειν μη εις τους νυν ακουοντας, αλλ᾽ εις τους μετα ταυτα συνεσομενους τοις συγγραμμασιν. Lucian, v. ii. p. 53. edit. Hemſterhuſ.

energy

energy of thought, love of virtue, and zeal for truth;—and their refined talents for political ſpeculation were exerciſed with a view to the welfare of their own countries, and the general improvement of mankind.

CHAPTER III.

The Hiſtory of the Jews.

THE Iſraelites, or ancient Jews, were thoſe diſtinguiſhed people, who were favoured by the immediate care of the Almighty, and conducted by his eſpecial guidance to a place of reſidence promiſed to their remote anceſtors. In conſequence of their obſtinacy, idolatry, and wickedneſs, and more particularly for the rejection of their Meſſiah, they were ſubdued by the Romans, after ſuſtaining a ſiege in their metropolis, unparalleled in the annals of hiſtory for its diſtreſſes, calamities, and ſlaughter. Jeruſalem was reduced to ruins, the Jewiſh government was totally ſubverted, and the ſurviving people were diſperſed over all the world. Their deſcendants ſtill remain unmixed with the reſt of mankind, and are marked by their original features of national peculiarity: they adhere with the moſt zealous attachment to the religion of their forefathers, and cheriſh the hopes of reſtoration to their former proſperity by means of a glorious and triumphant Deliverer.

They preſerve with the moſt watchful care the ſacred Books of their ancient writers. And aſtoniſhing, very aſtoniſhing it is to obſerve, that in the prophetical parts of theſe ſacred Books are contained all the events before mentioned of their extraordinary hiſtory. Their particular conduct, and the viciſſitudes of their national affairs, were predicted by their Prophets, and more eſpecially by Moſes, their great lawgiver, in the infancy of the world, at the vaſt diſtance of thirty-three centuries from the preſent times. The accompliſhment of theſe predictions bears the fulleſt and moſt ſtriking evidence to the truth and inſpiration of their Prophets, and illuſtrates the diſpenſations of Providence to his choſen people.

Theſe ſacred Books contain likewiſe predictions the moſt exact of the character, office, and actions of the Meſſiah of the Jews, the great lawgiver of the Chriſtians, the appointed Saviour of the world.

Such intereſting circumſtances as theſe, in addition to the peculiar nature of the Jewiſh polity, conſidered as a divine inſtitution, the curious manners and cuſtoms, and the memorable actions of the deſcendants of Abra-

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ham, viz. of the moſt ancient people of whom we have any authentic accounts, combine to place theſe Books firſt in order of importance, as in order of time.

If we conſider, I. The great *antiquity* of theſe Books; II. The *proofs* which ſupport their authenticity; III. *Their ſubjects, the characters of the writers*, and the place they occupy in the order of general hiſtory, particularly as they ſtand connected with the Chriſtian Revelation, they will be found to deſerve our very earneſt attention.

I. *The Antiquity of the Scriptures.*

No writings of any other nation can be brought into competition with thoſe of the Jews in this reſpect. In proof of this aſſertion, it may be remarked, that Moſes lived more than a thouſand years before the age of Herodotus, who is reputed the father of Grecian hiſtory; and rather earlier than he flouriſhed, Ezra and Nehemiah cloſed the records of the Jews[a]. As another proof of the priority of the Jews to the Greeks, it appears

[a] Moſes - - B. C. 1571 years.
Herodotus - - 445
The former therefore preceded the latter 1126 years.
Nehemiah lived - B. C. 456

by

by the confeſſion of the Greek writers themſelves, that they received the letters of their alphabet from the Phenicians; and there are very ſufficient grounds for believing, that the Phenicians derived the art of writing from the Jews. The learned and acute Porphyry, who was an equal enemy both to Jews and Chriſtians, and much attached to the learning of Greece, candidly acknowledged, that Moſes, and the Prophets who immediately ſucceeded him, flouriſhed nearly a thouſand years before any of the Greek philoſophers.

The Books, which compoſe the Canon of the Jewiſh Scriptures, have the concurrence of all antiquity in favour of their originality. They were delivered to the Hebrews in their own language, with every mark of genuineneſs, by the perſons, whoſe names they bear; and theſe perſons, by recording contemporary events, conſtantly appealed to well-known proofs of their regard to truth. The prophetical Books in particular contain the evidences of their inſpiration, as well as of the integrity and piety of their authors. The external proof is clear and ſtrong, as well as the internal; in conſequence of which all theſe Books have always been preſerved with the greateſt care, and have been held in the higheſt veneration.

It is no leſs curious than important to remark the traditions preſerved in the Pagan world, which confirm the truth of the Pentateuch, or the five books written by Moſes. The tenet of Thales, the great philoſopher of Miletus, that water was the primogenial element; the doctrine of Pythagoras, that the univerſe was created from a ſhapeleſs maſs of paſſive matter; the opinions, that the world was formed by an almighty Power, who gave to man the dominion over the inferior animals; and that man in his primeval ſtate was bleſſed with perfect innocence and happineſs, and reſided in a delightful and ever blooming paradiſe, deſcended from the earlieſt times. Many other parts of Grecian mythology, as well as the traditions prevalent among the various nations of the earth, and particularly among the inhabitants of the vaſt continent of Aſia, agree with the Moſaical account of the creation. The tradition of a deluge is ſpread over all parts of the world, and is the epoch from which is dated the origin of all records[b]. That the ſacrifice of

[b] Cicero thus repreſents the opinion of Thales. "Aquam eſſe initium rerum, Deum autem eam mentem quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret." Cicero de Nat. Deorum, l. i. c. xxv. This comes very cloſe to the Moſaic account: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Gen. i.

For

animals was neceſſary to appeaſe the offended gods, was a religious tenet very general and very ancient. The account of the long lives of the Patriarchs is confirmed by writers of various countries. Their primitive manners, and their mode of performing ſacrifices, and offering prayers to the great Author of nature on the ſummits of mountains, and in the retirements of groves, agree with the deſcriptions of Homer, and many other early writers. Zoroaſter, the great teacher of the ancient Perſians, derived from the Books of Moſes the firſt principles of his religion, his ceremonial laws, his account of the creation,

For the opinion of Pythagoras ſee Stillingfleet, Orig. Sac. p 287.

In the firſt book of Ovid's Metamorphoſes may be ſeen the happy ſtate of man in paradiſe, or the golden age; the progreſs of human depravity in the ſubſequent ages of the world; the determination of the Supreme Being to deſtroy the human race, with the exception of one pair, by a general deluge, &c. If you change only the names of perſons and places, you have the Scriptural account given with almoſt minute exactneſs. The effort of the giants to ſcale the heavens is evidently a fiction founded upon the attempt to erect the tower of Babel. The flood of Deucalion is a tranſcript of that of Noah. Jove is a plain abbreviation of Jehovah. Noah, the ark, and the dove, are circumſtances of tradition, or of hiſtory, in almoſt all countries of the world.

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of the first parents of mankind, of the Patriachs, and particularly of Abraham, whose pure religion he professed to restore.

In the attributes and characters of the Heathen gods may be found allusions to the ancient expressions of the Hebrew Scriptures. In the customs, laws, and ceremonies of many other nations may be traced a resemblance to the Mosaical institutions. In the accounts of the deities of the Pagans, and the early heroes and benefactors of mankind, particularly in those which adorn the pages of Grecian history, are represented many of the Patriarchs and illustrious persons of Scripture. Many principles of the most eminent philosophers, many fictions of the most celebrated poets, both of Greece and Rome, and many institutions of the most renowned Heathen lawgivers, cannot fail, by their circumstances of resemblance, to direct our attention to the great Legislator of the Jews. The most venerable and ancient traditions of the world seem to contain the parts of one original and uniform system, which was broken by the dispersion of the primeval families after the deluge, and corrupted by the revolutions of ages. They were the streams, which flowed through the various countries of the

earth,

earth, from the great ſource of Moſaical hiſtory [c].

The works of Joſephus, a perſon of great learning and eminence, who conducted his inquiries with ſingular diligence, induſtry, and care, corroborate the teſtimony of the ſacred writers, and illuſtrate their truth; as he not only gives a regular detail of the moſt remarkable tranſactions of the Jews, but introduces conſiderable notices of all thoſe people, with whom they formed alliances, or carried on wars. In his treatiſe againſt Apion, he expoſes the contradictions, which occurred in the Egyptian, Chaldean, and Phenician records; vindicates the authority of the Jewiſh Scriptures; deſcribes the care, which was taken in their preſervation; and ſtates their ſuperior pretenſions, more particularly in point of antiquity, to the reſpect and reverence of mankind [d].

II. *The Proofs of their authenticity.*

The ſupport given by the earlieſt Heathen writers to the records of Scripture is very ſtrong. The fragments of Sanchoniathon,

[c] See Stillingfleet, b. iii. c. 5. Bryant's Mythology, Maurice's Indian Antiquities, and Raleigh's Hiſtory of the World, p. 71.

[d] Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. i. p. 200. Lardner, vol. vii. p. 30. 259, &c.

thon, the moſt ancient hiſtorian of Phenicia, who is ſuppoſed to have flouriſhed not long after the death of Moſes, confirm the Scriptural account of the origin of the world, and of many perſons and places mentioned in the Pentateuch. Beroſus the Chaldean, and Manetho the Egyptian, who lived in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, repreſented ſeveral circumſtances conformably to the accounts given by Moſes [c]. They wrote indeed about the time when the Old Teſtament was tranſlated into Greek: but even taking it for granted, that they derived their accounts from the verſion of the Septuagint, their evidence is of no ſmall importance, as it ſhows the honour which was paid by the moſt learned perſons of the Eaſt to the ſacred records of the Jews; and that they looked upon them as the pureſt and the moſt authentic ſources of hiſtory.

The tranſactions and literature of the Jews were too remarkable to eſcape the attention of the learned and inquiſitive Pagans, when Judea became a province of the Roman empire. Many particulars relative to the eminent character of Joſeph, as a miniſter to Pharaoh,

[c] Beroſus and Manetho B. C. 270. Stillingfleet, Orig. Sacræ, vol. i. c. iii.

and as an inſpired prophet; to the emigration of the Jews from Egypt, their miraculous paſſage through the Red Sea, their ſettlement in the Holy Land, the inſtitutions and ceremonies of the Law, the ſplendour of Jeruſalem in its moſt flouriſhing times, the magnificence of the Temple, and the ſupreme, eternal, and immutable nature of the great object of their worſhip, are related by Trogus Pompeius, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Pliny the Elder, Tacitus, and Juſtin. Theſe eminent writers, however erroneous in ſome particulars, are ſufficiently correct in others; and however they may differ in ſome circumſtances from each other, they agree in the great outlines of hiſtory. They ſhow that the Jewiſh records were in their times thought worthy of high credit;—and that facts, well known in the world to be true and important, were faithfully related in thoſe records.

The greateſt care was taken of the books of the Old Teſtament in every period of the ancient church of the Jews. The original copies were depoſited in the temple at Jeruſalem, to ſerve for a ſacred memorial to poſterity. They were read in all the ſynagogues as long as the Jewiſh government remained;

mained; and the Jews themſelves were ſo ſcrupulouſly obſervant of the ſtrict purity and integrity of the ſacred Text, as to number every letter, and remark how often it occurred. They were accurately tranſcribed in every age, and tranſlations were made into different languages; ſo that, as copies were multiplied, ſecurities for the purity of the text increaſed; and forgery and corruption, in any paſſage of importance, became in the courſe of time impracticable. The whole religion, and all the civil and ſacred eſtabliſhments of the Jewiſh people, were founded upon the books of Moſes in particular, which were addreſſed to his contemporaries—that is to thoſe, who had ſeen his miracles, and heard his laws from his own mouth, and guarded with the moſt zealous care the volumes which recorded them. The inſtitutions of Moſes were incorporated into the commonwealth of the Jews; the exiſtence and ſupport of their government depended upon them; and their religion and laws were ſo interwoven with each other, that they could not be ſeparated[f]. Their right to the land of Canaan depended upon their confeſſion of the ſovereignty of God, who gave it to them; and on the truth of the Moſaical

[f] Stillingfleet, book ii. chap. 1.

hiſtory, relative to the divine promiſes made to the Patriarchs. The mutual diſſenſions, that prevailed among the Jews and Samaritans, were checks to each other, ſo as to preſerve the text of the Law in a ſtate of purity; and the diſputes, which prevailed between the Phariſees and Sadducees, ſerved equally to prevent any interpolations in the other books.

Mahomet, the founder of a new religion in Arabia, the acute and determined enemy both of Jews and Chriſtians, profeſſed his veneration of the Patriarchs and of Moſes, and revered the ſanctity of the Jewiſh inſtitutions[g]. Senſible of the high eſteem, in which they were held among all the nations of the Eaſt, he has not only interwoven the moſt important facts related in them, with the wild and deſultory contents of his Law, but has endeavoured from their expreſſions to draw arguments in favour of his own miſſion[h]. But

[g] Sale's Al Koran, p. 6. 16. 497. &c.

[h] "They ſay, become Jews, or Chriſtians, that ye may be directed. Say nay, we follow the religion of Abraham the orthodox, who was no idolater. Say, we believe in God, and that which hath been ſent down unto us, and that which hath been ſent down unto Abraham, and Iſhmael, and Iſaac, and Jacob, and the tribes; and that which

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what is the sanction of the author of the Koran to that given by the writers of the New Testament? The Evangelists and Apostles constantly refer to these sacred books, and more particularly to the Prophecies. They apply, illustrate, explain, and quote abundant texts, not merely as human productions, then popular among their countrymen; but because they contained the commands of God, and were the immediate declarations of the divine will. And, to bring forward an evidence of the highest authority in their favour, the Saviour of the world himself, even He who came expressly from heaven to bear witness of the truth, exhorted the Jews to "search the Scriptures," for that they testified of him. Frequently as he reproved the Jews for their erroneous doctrines and traditions, he never laid to their charge any corruption of their sacred books. At once to prove their authenticity and divine inspiration, "beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto his disciples in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." In his final instructions to them before his ascension, he reminded them,

was delivered unto Moses, and Jesus, and that which was delivered unto the Prophets from their Lord, &c." Al Koran, chap. 2. entitled the Cow.

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(I again quote his own moſt ſacred and moſt deciſive expreſſions,) "Theſe are the words which I ſpake unto you, while I was yet with you; that all things muſt be fulfilled which were written in the *Law of Moſes*, and in the *Prophets*, and in the *Pſalms*, concerning me[i]." Our Lord, by thus adopting the common diviſion of the Law, the Prophets, and the Pſalms, which comprehended all the Hebrew Scriptures, ratified the Canon of the Old Teſtament; and by declaring ſo expreſsly that thoſe books contained prophecies which muſt be fulfilled, he eſtabliſhed their divine inſpiration; ſince it is an attribute of the Almighty alone to enable men to foretel future events with certainty[k].

Abundant witneſſes in all ſucceeding ages can be brought to confirm the authenticity of theſe holy Scriptures. The Jews, diſperſed ſince the deſtruction of Jeruſalem over all parts of the world, have ever been prepared to ſuffer any hardſhip, rather than renounce the commands of their great Lawgiver, and reject the records of their inſpired Prophets. They have in common with the

[i] Luke xxiv. 44.

[k] Biſhop of Lincoln's Elements of Chriſtian Theology, vol. i. c. 1.

numerous Christian converts laboured in this pious work of preserving the sacred volume unimpaired by the accidents of time, and uncorrupted by artful interpolation. One generation has transmitted a regular testimony to another, and the chain of evidence has remained unbroken for a series of ages. But where are the pure and unmixed descendants of the Greeks or Romans, to attest the genuineness of *their* most esteemed books? Where are the subjects of Solon, Lycurgus, or Numa, who at this present time conform to the institutions, and are governed by the edicts of these ancient legislators? Vain is it for us to require such evidence.

To the testimony we derive from the living descendants of the Israelites, we have nothing similar in the world for the support of ancient writings; because they not only from age to age have asserted, and still continue to assert, their authenticity, under such peculiar circumstances of oppression and foreign dominion; but adhere to the laws contained in the books in question. Their practice is a demonstrative proof of their belief; and this double evidence, consisting in their conviction of the genuineness of the books, and in the direction of their conduct by the rules

rules thoſe books contain, aſcends higher and higher into antiquity, till paſſing through ſucceſſive ages, we reach the preciſe times in which Moſes and the Prophets flouriſhed.

Convinced by the cleareſt arguments of the authenticity of the Old Teſtament, the great Newton eſteemed it the proper introduction to the knowledge of profane antiquity. He found that the periods of Judaical generations and deſcents, which anſwered to the fabulous ages of Grecian hiſtory, were exactly of the ſame length with thoſe, which have been meaſured in later times, ſince hiſtory has been conſidered as authentic. He aſcertained likewiſe, that the Hebrew accounts coincided with the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the general courſe of nature; and were not like the Grecian and Roman chronology, which is in many caſes founded upon improbable and arbitrary ſuppoſitions. Furniſhed with ſuch an important clue to his diſcoveries, this great aſtronomer applied the principles of his favourite ſcience to the elucidation of hiſtory. By conſidering the relation which ſubſiſted between the preceſſion of the equinoxes and the lapſe of time, he rectified the whole ſyſtem of pro-

fane chronology [l]. Thus he diffuſed light over a region of darkneſs, and rendered the records of the Greeks and Romans clear, conſiſtent, and probable, by the application of theſe principles: but ſo far was he from diſturbing the order of events, or contradicting the computations of time ſtated in the ſacred Books, that their truth and accuracy were invariably confirmed by his reſearches [m].

Such are ſome of the proofs which confirm the authenticity of the Old Teſtament; and from a review of them we are juſtified in the concluſion, that in point of ſtrength and authority theſe proofs are ſuperior to thoſe that can be adduced to ſupport any other ancient writings.

III. *The Subjects of the Books, and Characters of the Writers.*

The ſubjects of the Books of the Old Teſtament

[l] The equinoctial points are found by aſtronomers to change their places, and go backward or weſtward, contrary to the order of the ſigns of the Zodiac. This is called their *preceſſion*. Dr. Bradley ſuppoſes it to be a degree in about ſeventy years: the calculation of Sir Iſaac Newton does not amount to ſo much.

[m] Prieſtley's Lectures on Hiſtory, p. 89, &c.

tament are truly wonderful and ſtriking, and of ſuch a nature as to ſurpaſs all monuments of profane learning, equally in importance as in antiquity. And of all the parts which compoſe the ſacred canon, none are more curious, than the firſt book written by Moſes; becauſe it contains a ſketch of the earlieſt hiſtory of mankind. There ſtand recorded the creation of the world and its inhabitants, the fall of our firſt parents from their ſtate of innocence and happineſs, and their baniſhment from the garden of Eden; the repeated and ſignal promiſes of a future Reſtorer of the loſt bleſſings of mankind; the hiſtory of the Patriarchs, honoured by the Revelations of Jehovah; the deſcription of the general deluge; the diſperſion of the progenitors of the human race over all the earth; the adoption of a particular family to perpetuate the remembrance, and eſtabliſh the worſhip, of the true God, and their proſperous ſettlement in Egypt. There ſociety is repreſented in its primeval form, when ſimple nature dictated the rules of manners, and long before falſe refinement had vitiated the original ſimplicity of men, or luxury and extravagance had depraved their hearts.

In the ſacred books of the Jews is recorded

an account of the deſcendants of Iſrael; a race of men ſelected from all others, and favoured with ſucceſſive revelations of the divine will. Here are ſhewn the inſtances of their fidelity, perverſeneſs, and diſobedience; their glory, and triumphs; their diſgraces, and their ſubjection to foreign powers. Here is ſeen the ſuperintendence of a divine and eſpecial Providence watching over innocence, ſuſpending wrath, and taking the moſt ſignal vengeance upon unrepented offences. Here are developed the failings of the moſt virtuous perſons, and the obdurate wickedneſs of confirmed ſinners. Here are diſplayed the mixed characters even of the moſt excellent men, the eminent examples of faith and piety, of courage and patience, in the conduct of Abraham, Lot, Job, Joſeph, Moſes, David, Hezekiah, Joſiah, and Daniel. And moſt intereſting is it to obſerve, that the knowledge of the one true God was communicated to this people, and preſerved by them alone; that they had the moſt ſublime ideas of his nature and attributes; that a magnificent temple was erected to his honour; a regular ſervice was inſtituted; holy ceremonies were performed; an order of prieſts of one particular family was conſecrated; a pure worſhip was eſtabliſhed by his expreſs command,

mand, and regulated by his particular laws. Thus were the Jews enlightened by a knowledge of the true object of divine worship; and thus were the purity and holiness of their religious ordinances conducted at a time, when all other nations presented a wide scene of gross superstition and mental darkness; when the rest of the human race, and even the most intelligent and polished nations of Ægypt and Greece, shewed the most abject degradation of their nature, by prostrating themselves before idols of their own workmanship; and abused the evidence of sense and the faculty of reason, by imputing to wood and stone the attributes of divinity.

We see likewise a succession of Prophets raised up among them, to communicate the divine will, to warn them of evils, and to announce to them blessings to come [o]. These holy men, ever obedient to the call of heaven, rose superior to all worldly considerations; and with a spirit of intrepidity and independence, which clearly shewed that heaven was the source of their reliance, they executed their sacred commissions, unawed by the threats of kings, or the resentment of

[o] Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. i. Introductory Chapter, &c.

the people. They foretold remote events in times moſt improbable for them ever to take place, and when no human foreſight, and no calculation of chances could guide them to the diſcovery of the particular affairs, which fulfilled their predictions. Moſes, in a long and moſt intereſting detail of threats and promiſes, foretold the exact manner in which his people were ordained to be happy or miſerable, according as they followed or diſobeyed the divine laws. At a ſubſequent period, when Jeruſalem was laid in ruins, and the Jews were groaning under the ſorrows of the Babyloniſh captivity, Iſaiah ſolemnly addreſſed Cyrus by his name, more than a hundred years before his birth, as the deliverer of Iſrael, and the new founder of the Holy City[p]. When Babylon was ſhining in the meridian of her glory, and its monarchs ruled over all the nations of the Eaſt with the moſt uncontrolled ſway, the ſame Prophet predicted the total ſubverſion of their empire, and the complete deſolation of their vaſt metropolis. That all theſe and numerous other predictions were exactly verified by the events, are truths confirmed by the evidence of profane, as well as ſacred hiſtory. The ſame inſpired

[p] Iſaiah, B. C. 757. Cyrus, B. C. 589. Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. i. p. 130.

Prophets had a much more grand and important object in view, than to declare the future dispensations of Providence to one nation in particular; for they announced in terms at first dark and mysterious, but progressively more clear and circumstantial, the future birth of a Messiah—a glorious King—a divine Legislator, who was to abolish the sacrifices and religious institutions of the Jews, and proclaim and establish a general Law for the observance and happiness of all mankind. Here the Evangelists contribute their aid to illustrate the declarations of the Prophets, and unite the history of the Old with that of the New Testament, in the most close and indissoluble bonds of union.

The historical books of Scripture, considered from the giving of the Law to Moses, to the reformation in the worship and government by Nehemiah, after the Babylonish captivity, contain a summary account of the Jewish affairs for a period of eleven centuries[q]. They were evidently not intended to give a complete detail of national transactions, as their writers had a more sublime and important end in view. To illustrate the pro-

[q] Moses, B. C. 1571. Nehemiah, B. C. 456. Gray's Key, p. 124.

phecies,

phecies, by recording circumſtances which exiſted at the time when they were uttered, and to ſhow their accompliſhment; to record various revelations of the Divine will, and to deſcribe the ſtate of religion among the Hebrews, and the various diſpenſations of Providence in public, as well as in private occurrences, ſeem to have been their chief objects. Hence it is that the chain of hiſtory is ſometimes broken into detached parts, and its detail is interrupted by a recital of private tranſactions. The books of Scripture occaſionally aſſume the form, and compriſe the beauties of a very intereſting kind of biography. Of this nature are the ſeveral accounts of Job, Ruth, and Eſther; but they are far from being unconnected with the principal deſign of the ſacred writers; inaſmuch as they ſhow that the ſame divine Providence which preſided over the nation at large, extended its particular care to individuals, and that the examples of private virtue were inſeparable from the great intereſts of public welfare and happineſs.

The Iſraelites, for many ages ſeparated from the reſt of mankind by their peculiar inſtitutions, were little acquainted with commerce, and made ſmall advances in thoſe arts,

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which with a refinement, and a diverſity of employments, introduce luxury and corruption of manners. They were governed by equal laws, and poſſeſſed nearly equal property. They admitted no hereditary diſtinction of rank, except in favour of the regal tribe of Judah, and the ſacerdotal family of Levi. Their occupations from the earlieſt times were of the moſt ſimple kind, and conſiſted in paſturage and agriculture. To guide the plough, and tend the flock, were employments which, recommended by the innocence of primeval manners, and dignified by length of time, were exerciſed by kings, prophets, and generals. Moſes was called from feeding his flock, to conduct the Iſraelites to the promiſed land; Eliſha forſook the plough, to be inveſted with the mantle of prophecy; and Gideon left the threſhing-floor, to lead the army of his country to battle.

The country of Judea preſented a ſcene diverſified by fruitful valleys, barren rocks, and lofty mountains, and was watered by numerous ſtreams. It produced the palm-tree, the balſam, the vine, the olive, the fig, and all the fruits which abound in the Eaſt. From the labours of the field, and from cultivating the vine, the attention of the Iſraelites was regularly

regularly called by religious worſhip, which was intimately blended with the civil conſtitution of the ſtate. The ſplendour of their public ſervices, the pomp and magnificence of their rites and ceremonies, the ſtated recurrence of their various feſtivals and ſacrifices, the ſabbath, the paſſover, the celebration of the ſabbatical year, and the jubilee; and more than all, the conſtant experience of divine interpoſition, filled their minds with the moſt awful and grand ideas, and gave them the deepeſt impreſſions of the majeſty, power, goodneſs, and juſtice of God.

Theſe were the circumſtances, which combining to form their national manners, had the greateſt influence upon their writings. The hiſtorical ſtyle is marked by the pureſt ſimplicity of ideas, occaſionally raiſed to a tone of elevation. In the works of Moſes there is a majeſty of thought, which is moſt ſtrikingly expreſſed in plain and energetic language. In the prophetical writings, the greateſt ſplendour and ſublimity of compoſition are conſpicuous. They are enriched by thoſe glowing images, and raiſed by that grandeur of diction, which charm the claſſical reader in the moſt admired productions of Greece and Rome. The Royal Pſalmiſt is eloquent,

eloquent, dignified, and pathetic. All the beauties of composition unite in Isaiah—such is the majesty of his ideas, the propriety, beauty, and fertility of his imagery, and the elegance of his language, employed upon the noblest subjects which could possibly engage our attention. Jeremiah excels in those expressions of tenderness, which excite with the most pleasing enthusiasm the feelings of compassion [r].

By such peculiar beauties of composition are recommended the most interesting details of events, and the most faithful delineations of characters. The great Creator calls all things into existence with his omnipotent word. The first parents of mankind, innocent and happy, are blessed with his immediate converse, and enjoy the blooming groves of Paradise. Joseph, the pious, the chaste, and the wise, after having undergone great

[r] "Quid enim habet universa poesis, quid concipere potest mens humana grandius, excelsius, ardentius, quid etiam venustius et elegantius, quam quæ in sacris Hebræorum vatum scriptis occurrunt? qui magnitudinem rerum fere ineffabilem verborum pondere et carminis majestate exæquant; quorum cum nonnulli vel ipsis Græcorum poetarum fabulis sunt antiquiores, ita omnes tantum eos sublimitate exsuperant, quantum vetustate antiquissimi antecedunt." Lowth, Prælect. p. 16. See likewise p. 7, 8. 21.

affliction,

afflictions, and rising by his own extraordinary merit to an office of the highest honour in the court of Pharaoh, discovers himself in a manner the most pathetic to his repentant brethren, and is restored to his aged and affectionate father, whom he invites into Egypt to share his prosperity. The Children of Israel, guided by the divine Power, which veils its glory in a cloud, pass safely through the Red Sea, in which the hosts of the impious Pharaoh are overwhelmed. Upon the lofty summit of Mount Sinai, Moses receives the two tables of the Commandments, amid the thunder, lightning, clouds, and darkness, which obscure the great Jehovah from his eyes. The royal Psalmist sings the wonders of creation, the powers of his God, and his own defeats and triumphs. The peaceful and prosperous Solomon, whose renown was extended over all the East, rears the structures of the magnificent Temple; and amid the multitudes of his adoring subjects consecrates it to the service of the one true God, in a prayer which equally attests his wisdom and piety. In the visions of futurity, Isaiah beholds the deliverance of the chosen People; the complete destruction of the great empire of Babylon, by which they were enslaved; and the promised Messiah, the Saviour of man-

kind,

kind, ſometimes depreſſed by want and ſorrow, and ſometimes arrayed in the emblems of divine majeſty and power. He predicts the final recal of the Jews to their native land, and the wide diffuſion of the Chriſtian faith. Jeremiah ſinks a weeping mourner over the ruins of his native city, deplores its calamities, and conſoles his countrymen by expreſsly declaring, that they ſhould never ceaſe to be a nation to the end of the world. Daniel explains to Belſhazzar the myſtic characters inſcribed upon the walls of his palace; and views in his wide proſpect of future times, the fates of the four great empires of the world. Cyrus, long before announced by Iſaiah as the great ſubverter of the Babyloniſh empire, and the reſtorer of the glory of Jeruſalem, publiſhes his decree for the reſtoration of the captive Jews; and the holy City and Temple riſe from their ruins with new grandeur and magnificence. The Jews are ſettled and reformed by the pious care of Nehemiah, and the canon of the Scriptures is cloſed by Malachi. This laſt of the Prophets enjoins the ſtrict obſervance of the Law of Moſes, till the great Precurſor ſhould appear, in the ſpirit of Elias, to announce the approach of the Meſſiah, who was to eſtabliſh a new and an everlaſting covenant. [s]

[s] For theſe very impreſſive paſſages of the Holy Bible, ſee

Such are a few of the intereſting circumſtances contained in the ſacred volume of the Old Teſtament, which engage our attention, charm our imagination, and gratify our curioſity, while they confirm our belief in the great evidences of Revelation. In all theſe works we may remark the bright truths of religious inſtruction ſhining forth amid the venerable ſimplicity of the moſt ancient hiſtory—a hiſtory unrivalled for the grandeur of the ideas which it conveys, the livelineſs of its deſcriptions, and the number of its beautiful and ſublime images.

In theſe volumes of ſacred hiſtory there is an impartiality of narrative, which is an undoubted characteriſtic of truth. If we read the Lives of Plutarch, or the Hiſtory of Livy, we ſoon diſcover that theſe writers compoſed their works under the influence of many prejudices in favour of their reſpective countries. A veil is thrown over the defects of their heroes, but their virtues are placed in a ſtrong light, and painted in vivid colours. In the Scriptures, on the contrary, both of the Old and the New Teſtament, the ſtrict-

ſee Gen. i. ii. xliv. xlv. Exod. xiv. xx. The Pſalms. 1 Kings viii. Iſaiah ii. vi. ix. x. xi. xiv. xxviii. xxxii. xl. xlii. lx. lxi. lxiii. lxv. and more particularly liii. Lament. i. &c. Daniel v. vii. Ezra vii. Nehem. xiii. Malachi iii. iv.

eſt impartiality prevails. The vices of David, Solomon, and their ſucceſſors, are neither concealed nor palliated. There is no oſtentation of vanity, no parade of panegyric; virtue charms with her native beauty, and vice acquires no diſguiſe to conceal her deformity. The characters of perſons are ſketched, and the effects of the paſſions are repreſented without reſerve or concealment; and the moral to be drawn from each deſcription is ſo obvious, as to account for the frequent omiſſion of remarks and applications. The abject condition of the Jews, when prohibited the uſe of weapons of war by the victorious Philiſtines; their relapſes into idolatry, their perverſeneſs of diſpoſition, and their various defeats and captivities, with every circumſtance of private as well as public diſgrace, are recorded without palliation or reſerve. Always riſing ſuperior to the motives which induce other authors to violate the purity, and degrade the majeſty of truth, theſe writers keep one great and moſt important end conſtantly in view, and ſhow the various methods, by which the providence of God effected his gracious deſigns; how he produced good from evil, and employed the ſins and follies of mankind as the great inſtruments of his gracious purpoſes.

An acquaintance with the affairs of the Jewiſh nation forms the firſt link in the chain of ancient records. Thus we may obſerve the connexion which ſubſiſts between the branches of ſacred and profane hiſtory. We place the works of pagan writers in their proper ſituation, and give them additional value by making them ſubſervient to the cauſe of religion, and inſtrumental in the illuſtration of revealed truth. If the ſtudent is not called upon by profeſſional inducements to drink the ſacred ſtreams at their ſource, by reading the Scriptures in the original language, he may reſt contented with tranſlations; and it ſeems to be a well-founded opinion among the learned, that he may rely with confidence upon the general fidelity of our Engliſh verſion.

To peruſe the holy Scriptures is one of the firſt employments of childhood. We cannot fail to congratulate ourſelves that our time has been thus occupied, when our judgment is ſufficiently mature to form a comparative eſtimate of the various productions of literature, and we are fully able to determine their uſefulneſs. And it will be found, as life is verging towards its cloſe—when every other book begins to be inſipid and unintereſting, that

that the HOLY BIBLE, which includes the moſt ancient records of time, the cleareſt evidences of a divine revelation, and the joyful promiſes of eternal happineſs, will attract us more and more, as old age advances, and afford us that divine ſolace and inexpreſſible ſatisfaction, which no other writings can give.

In conformity with theſe obſervations as to the excellence of the Scriptures, was the opinion of the late Sir William Jones, a perſon, as much diſtinguiſhed by the ſoundneſs of his judgment, as by his extenſive and various learning. In the laſt leaf of his Bible theſe words were written[s]: "*I have regularly and attentively read theſe holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that this volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more ſublimity and beauty, more pure morality, more important hiſtory, and finer ſtrains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been compoſed.*"

[s] Seward's Anecdotes, vol. v. p. 176.

CHAPTER IV.

The Hiſtory of Greece.

THE country of Greece preſents a variety of the moſt pleaſing proſpects, as it is well watered by rivers and lakes, divided by lofty mountains and verdant vales, favoured by a happy temperature of climate, and enriched by fertility of ſoil. The ſea, abounding with all kinds of marine productions, and affording the moſt favourable opportunities for commerce, nearly ſurrounds its winding ſhores. Such is the appearance of the country, which, according to the moſt authentic records of hiſtory, was made in very early times a ſettlement of coloniſts from Egypt and Phenicia, who, mixing with the natives, built towns, and formed ſeveral communities independent of each other. Theſe eaſtern emigrants brought with them many traditions, which, being afterwards blended with early Grecian hiſtory, became the copious ſources of mythology. The various inventions and arts, which they introduced among the original inhabitants of Greece, contributed to augment their comforts, and civilize their manners.

ners. And as in the general outlines of their religion, government, and arts, the ſimilarity of the political and religious inſtitutions of the Eaſt may be traced, Greece furniſhes us with an internal evidence of the origin of her coloniſts.

In the early period of this hiſtory there is ſo great a mixture of Eaſtern with Grecian ſtories, and ſo much confuſion of chronology, extending through a long ſeries of oral traditions, that an attempt to ſeparate truth from falſehood is as arduous as it is fruitleſs. Fully ſenſible of this difficulty, and deſirous of remedying it by a pleaſing, although an imperfect expedient, Thucydides and Strabo, who are both remarkable for their accuracy and judgment, have conſidered Homer in the light of an hiſtorian [a]. That their confidence in the truth of the narrative parts of his Poems was not improperly placed, will appear from conſidering, that in the rude ages of ſociety the ſong of the Bard was the faithful record of paſt events; and although many of his deſcriptions may be fictitious, yet ſome regard to truth, ſome repreſentation of events and actions which really took place, muſt

[a] Thucydides, vol. i. p. 7, 16, 18. Edit. Bipont. Strabo, lib. ii. p. 774.

 have

have been the ground of the early reputation of the Iliad and Odyſſey. The connexion, clearneſs, and conſiſtency of many anecdotes preſerved in them, appear very great, when compared with the dark and uncertain traditions of thoſe early ages. The finiſhed picture of primeval inſtitutions and manners, in the delineation of which Homer deſcends to many minute particulars, is no leſs pleaſing than ſatisfactory. He gives a complete view of the religion, government, and arts of his countrymen at the time of the Trojan war, which took place at the very remote period of more than eleven centuries before the Chriſtian era [b]. A ſtrong argument in favour of his fidelity may be drawn from the accuracy of his geographical deſcriptions, which have been verified by the actual obſervation of many intelligent and inquiſitive travellers. And it may incline us more readily to concur with Thucydides and Strabo in thinking, that he truly records the leading facts, and fairly repreſents the ſtate of manners, at the time of the Trojan war, if we recollect, that in the unaffected energy of his deſcriptions, and his account of the ſimplicity of ancient manners, he agrees very remarkably with the writers of the Old Teſtament, and ſuggeſts

[b] Homer flouriſhed B. C. 907 years.

to

to us the ſimilarity of character, which prevailed between the patriarchs of Canaan and the heroes of Greece.

Greece was divided into a variety of unconnected ſtates, diſtinguiſhed by different forms of government, and remarkable for frequent revolutions. Yet as the political conſequence of them all was for the moſt part relative, and depended, eſpecially in the later and more celebrated periods of their hiſtory, upon their connexion with Athens and Lacedemon, theſe diſtinguiſhed Republics ought to be conſidered with a more immediate view to their RELIGION, GOVERNMENT, ARTS, MANNERS, and CONQUESTS.

I. *The Religion of Greece.*

From the Egyptians and other nations, to whom the Greeks were indebted for their earlieſt laws, they derived their eſtabliſhed religion. To the worſhip of the twelve principal divinities, the gratitude of ſucceeding ages added the deification of heroes, and legiſlators renowned for their important ſervices to ſociety. Various degrees of adoration were paid to the Gods, and to the ſouls of departed heroes. Temples were erected, feſtivals were inſtituted, games were celebrated,

 and

and ſacrifices were offered, with more or leſs pomp and magnificence, to them all. A regular gradation of immortal beings was acknowledged to preſide throughout univerſal nature, from the Naiad, who was adored as the tutelary guardian of a ſtream, to Jupiter, the Father of Gods and men, who ruled with ſupreme power over heaven and earth.

The religion of the people extended little beyond the external honours paid to the Gods of their country, and the attendance upon ſacrifices and proceſſions. The ſacred ceremonies were magnificent and public, except that the votaries of Bacchus and Ceres were indulged in their ſecret myſteries. The feſtivals were obſerved with every circumſtance of pomp and ſplendour to charm the eye, and pleaſe the imagination. A ſacrifice was a feaſt attended with gaiety, and even licentiouſneſs. Every temple was the reſort of the idle and the diſſolute ; and the ſhrines of the Cyprian Venus, and the Athenian Minerva, could atteſt that devotion, far from being a pure and exalted exerciſe of the mind, was only the introduction to diſſoluteneſs and debauchery. Athens was moſt renowned for the number of her ſacred edifices, and excelled the reſt of the Grecian cities

ties in the frequency and grandeur of her feſtivals.

The northern regions of Greece were particularly celebrated for temples, from whence oracles were iſſued. The temple of Apollo at Delphi, ſituated upon a lofty rock near Parnaſſus, and that of Jupiter in the groves of Dodona, were celebrated for the reſponſes of the Pythia and the prieſts; they were held in the greateſt veneration for many ages; and their oracles were conſulted, even in the moſt enlightened times, by philoſophers themſelves, who, in this inſtance, as well as many others, conformed to the popular ſuperſtitions.

The ſpirit of the religion of ancient Greece was included in theſe principles,—that the worſhip of the Gods was of ſuperior obligation and importance to all other duties,—and that they frequently diſplayed their power in this world, in the puniſhment of the bad, and the proſperity of the virtuous: ſuch were the opinions inculcated by the moſt celebrated philoſophers and poets. But the common people, more gratified by the fictions of the received mythology, than by tenets of pure ethics, found in the actions recorded of

of their gods and goddeſſes a ſufficient juſtification of every ſpecies of licentiouſneſs.

With reſpect to a future ſtate of exiſtence, the philoſophers appear to have fluctuated in uncertainty; as may be collected from the ſentiments of Socrates himſelf. The poets inculcated a belief in Tartarus and Elyſium. Of the former they have drawn a picture in the moſt gloomy and horrific colours, where men, who had been remarkable for impiety to the gods, ſuch as Tantalus, Tityus, and Siſyphus, were tortured with a variety of miſery, ingeniouſly adapted to their crimes. The proſpect of Elyſium is beautiful and inviting, as deſcribed by Homer, Heſiod, and Pindar. In that delightful region there is no inclement weather, but the ſoft Zephyrs blow from the ocean to refreſh the inhabitants, who live without care or anxiety; there reigns perpetual ſunſhine and ſerenity of ſky, and the fertile earth thrice in a year produces delicious fruits for their ſuſtenance. Theſe enjoyments were, however, not only of a groſs and ſenſual nature, but were limited to perſons of rank and diſtinction. Proteus informs Menelaus, that he ſhall be conveyed to the iſlands of the bleſſed, becauſe he is the huſband of Helen, and the ſon in law of Jupiter.

piter [c]. No incentives to goodneſs, from the conſideration of a future ſtate, are held out by the older poets to the female ſex, or to the ignoble or vulgar, however pure their conduct, or exemplary their virtues. In later times we find, that Pindar extends his rewards to good men in general; but Euripides is ſometimes ſceptical, and Iphigenia without heſitation expreſſes her diſbelief of the popular mythology.

It is well remarked by the ingenious and learned Jortin, " That it gives us pleaſure to trace in Homer the important doctrine of a ſupreme God, a providence, a free agency in man, ſuppoſed to be conſiſtent with fate or deſtiny; a difference between moral good and evil, inferior gods, or angels, ſome favourable to men, others malevolent; and the immortality of the ſoul: but it gives us pain to find theſe notions ſo miſerably corrupted, that they muſt have had a very weak influence to excite men to virtue, and to deter them from vice [d]." This excellent obſervation may be applied to the ſtate of opinions even in the moſt enlightened times of Greece, when the

[c] Odyſſ. iv. l. 56.

[d] Jortin, Diſſertation VI. p. 245.

reduc-

credulity and ignorance of the vulgar, the errors and doubts of the greateſt philoſophers, proved the neceſſity and the importance of the Chriſtian revelation, with reſpect both to the duties and the incentives to the diſcharge of thoſe duties, ariſing from the final deſtination of man.

The characters of the two great legiſlators of Sparta and Athens were evidently very different. Lycurgus was diſtinguiſhed by the vigour and the inflexibility of his diſpoſition. Solon was mild, circumſpect, and compliant. The marks of their tempers were viſibly impreſſed upon their reſpective political eſtabliſhments.

II. *Sparta.*

It is unneceſſary to enlarge upon the conſtitution of Sparta, previous to the time of LYCURGUS, any farther than to obſerve, that there were two hereditary kings, or preſidents, whoſe power he controlled by giving an equal authority to twenty-eight ſenators [e].

[e] B. C. 884 years. Plutarch's Life of Lycurgus. Mitford, vol. i. c. 5. "We are told, that Lycurgus being aſked why he, who in other reſpects appeared ſo zealous for the equal rights of men, did not make his government democratical rather than oligarchal, "Go you," the legiſlator anſwered, "and try a democracy in your own houſe." Mitford's Greece, vol. i. p. 252.

The

The kings were commanders of the armies, and high priests of the temples. Of the senators was composed the executive and legislative council of the state, and with them all laws originated. The assembly of the people was invested with the power of electing the senators; they could give a simple negative, or affirmative, to the measures proposed to them, but had no right to discuss their propriety. Lycurgus allotted to every family an equal share of land, prohibited the use of gold and silver, and made iron money alone current, with a view to check the avarice of his subjects. He forbad foreign travel, lest their morals should be corrupted by an intercourse with effeminate nations. He instituted public tables, at which even the kings of Sparta were required to share the coarsest viands with their people, and to set examples of the most rigid temperance. To produce a hardy and vigorous race of men, he caused the women to be employed in all athletic exercises. The children were carefully inspected as soon as born; the well-proportioned and healthy were delivered to the public nurses; and those who were deformed, or sickly, were exposed to perish in woods and mountains. Celibacy was held disreputable; yet the rights of female honour and marriage were not secured

cured from violation: for provided the child which was born by promiſcuous intercourſe was ſtrong and robuſt, no inquiry was made to aſcertain its father. All the children of the Spartans were conſidered as the offspring, or rather the property, of the ſtate; and the buſineſs of their public education conſiſted in accuſtoming them to bear the cravings of hunger and thirſt, and endure the ſcourge of diſcipline, and every degree of pain, with patience, and even exultation. The paſſions of the young Spartan were ſo enflamed by patriotic ardour, and his body was ſo hardened by conſtant exerciſe, as to make him eager to undertake, and powerful to accompliſh, every exploit for the glory of his country.

As Lycurgus wiſhed his people to enjoy the moſt complete independence, he provided the means of ſecurity againſt foreign attacks by eſtabliſhing the ſtricteſt military diſcipline. In order, however, to guard againſt the deſire of conqueſt, he forbad his ſubjects to engage too frequently in war with the ſame nations. This was the curb, by which he endeavoured to reſtrain their military ardour: the deſire of conqueſt however was a diſeaſe inherent in the vitals of his ſyſtem, and it frequently broke

broke out in succeeding times, as often as any temptation occurred of extending their dominions. By institutions the most severe ever imposed on mankind, Lycurgus formed the habits of his people, and even far surpassed other legislators, by regulating their conduct in many circumstances, which are generally supposed not to come within the province of legal restrictions. He prescribed rules of the most rigid abstemiousness, inculcated respect to age, enjoined modesty of behaviour, and promoted the constant intercourse of the old and young. In other governments, many valuable institutions arise out of casual circumstances; the character of the people, and particular situations of affairs, which sometimes direct, and sometimes impel the legislator in the formation of his system: but in Lacedemon almost every rule seems to have sprung from the comprehensive mind of Lycurgus, and his institutions were eminently his own. Before his death he saw every part of his political machine set in motion. The Spartans exulted in their new strength; and their desire to exert it was so ardent, that they were soon distinguished among the neighbouring states as a warlike and formidable people. For many ages they manifested a firm adherence to the will of their lawgiver; and, not to adduce

duce other examples of their ſtrict adherence to their original inſtitutions, the monument erected in the ſtraits of Thermopylæ, to record the glorious fall of Leonidas, and his brave aſſociates, expreſſed in an inſcription exactly characteriſtic of the genius and the ſpirit of the nation, that they maintained their poſt to the laſt extremity, in obedience to the orders of their country [f].

The reverence of the Spartans for old age, their abſtemiouſneſs, perfect diſcipline, and great bravery, muſt not ſo far blind our judgment, as to induce us to palliate the imperfections of their laws, and the impropriety of their conduct. The honour in which they

[f] Ω ξειν' αγγελλειν Λακεδαιμονιοις ὁτι τῃδε
Κειμεθα, τοις κεινων ῥημασι πειθομενοι.

Herodot. lib. vii. ſect. 455.

The ſentiment is the ſame which Demaratus expreſſed to Xerxes in his character of the Spartans. Herod. Polymn. ſect. civ.

To them more awful than the name of king
To Aſia's trembling millions, is the law,
Whoſe ſacred voice enjoins them to confront
Unnumber'd foes, to vanquiſh or to die.

Glover's Leonidas.

Herodot. lib. vii. ſect. 219. Mitford, vol. i. p. 407. This writer's relation of the battle is peculiarly diſtinct and accurate. See Plutarch's Lives, vol. i. p. 292.

held

held the ſucceſsful perpetration of theft, their cruelty to their ſlaves, their inhumanity to children, the indelicacy of their conduct to women, and the inſenſibility and maſculine energy of character, with which they endeavoured to inſpire them, all unite to mark a ferocious and a barbarous people. The improvement of the mind, and the pureſt feelings of nature, were ſacrificed to ſevere diſcipline, and martial occupations. They extended the ſame rigour to their allies, which they exerciſed at home; and thus became the objects of hoſtility and averſion. By a ſtrange inconſiſtency in their laws, they were trained to arms, but ſtopped in the career of conqueſt; they were made a nation of warriors, yet forbidden to purſue a flying enemy, or to enrich themſelves with his ſpoils.

Eminent as they were in the field of battle, both kings and generals were incapable of compoſing the hiſtories of their campaigns, and no book has ever been tranſmitted to modern times, written by a genuine Spartan of the Doric race. They preferred the exerciſe of arms to the cultivation of letters, and left their exploits to be handed down to poſterity by their enemies.

During the reign of fourteen ſucceſſive kings, through the long period of five hundred years, their power and influence were felt throughout Greece; and for a conſiderable part of that period, the glory of Sparta eclipſed the other ſtates. But in proceſs of time the auſtere manners of her warriors were relaxed by victory and luxury. The univerſal applauſe with which they welcomed, and the rapacity with which they divided, the ſpoils of Athens, when that city was taken by Lyſander, were ſtrong indications of their degeneracy. Of this gradual departure from the inſtitutions of their great legiſlator, their ſubſequent venality, luxury, and avarice, were ſufficient proofs[g].

III. *Athens.*

A fairer order of civil polity is diſplayed in the conſtitution of Athens; a conſtitution, which furniſhed not only a model for the laws of Rome, but for moſt of the nations of modern Europe. It was a regular ſyſtem of juriſprudence, extending to every claſs of citizens. The moſt judicious writers agree, that thoſe improvements, which formed the peculiar merit of Athens, were introduced by So-

[g] Polybius, lib. vi. p. 685. tom. i.

lon,

lon, about two centuries and a half after the reign of Lycurgus.

The ſituation of Attica naturally directed the attention of its inhabitants to commerce, and naval affairs. They poſſeſſed a country comparatively barren, and where it was impoſſible for numbers to ſubſiſt without a ſupply of foreign produce. This deficiency naturally pointed out the ſea to them as the proper ſphere for their exertions, and in proceſs of time they roſe to the higheſt eminence, as a commercial ſtate; their great intercourſe with ſtrangers gave a particular direction to their laws, and promoted that urbanity of manners, by which they were ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed.

SOLON veſted the ſovereign power in the general aſſembly of the people, which was compoſed of free men, whoſe age exceeded thirty years[h]. In order to obviate the evils, which a democratic ſtate muſt naturally produce, when inveſted with an abſolute and uncontrouled authority, he eſtabliſhed a ba-

[h] B. C. 594. Plutarch's Life of Solon. Mitford, vol. i. chap. 6.

lance of power in the council of five hundred. The members of this council were appointed every year by lot, were poſſeſſed of certain legal qualifications, and more particularly were obliged to ſtand the teſt of a ſevere ſcrutiny into their moral character, before they were inveſted with their high office. They had the direction of all political concerns, and prepared buſineſs for the aſſembly of the people, to whom no meaſure was propoſed without their previous ſanction. Solon likewiſe reſtored the court of Areopagus, ſo much celebrated for the pure adminiſtration of juſtice, and the unſullied character of its members, who exerciſed a judicial power, and tried criminals for capital offences. It was their duty to inſpect the general behaviour of the citizens, ſuperintend the conduct of youth, and take care they were educated in a manner ſuitable to their rank. But their greateſt privileges conſiſted in a power of reverſing the decrees of the popular aſſembly, in reſcuing the condemned from their ſentence, and condemning the acquitted. Of the juſtice, impartiality, and wiſdom of the Areopagus, in the exerciſe of their ſupreme authority, no higher idea can be given than by the lofty panegyric of the great Roman orator,

orator, who affirmed, that this council was as eſſential to the proſperity of Athens, as the providence of the Gods to the government of the world. By the eſtabliſhment of theſe two aſſemblies, a large mixture of ariſtocracy was infuſed into the commonwealth, and the adminiſtration of public affairs was ſecured againſt the danger of popular tumult, caprice, and violence.

In addition to the general aſſembly of the people, the Areopagus, and the council of five hundred, there were no leſs than ten courts of judicature, four for criminal; and ſix for civil cauſes. Over theſe preſided nine archons, who were inveſted with great authority, and the magiſtrate who for the ſake of pre-eminence, was ſtiled "the Archon," exerciſed a religious, as well as a civil juriſdiction. But the merits of the cauſes, and the validity of the evidence which were ſubmitted to their conſideration, were decided by a certain number of men, ſelected from the citizens at large. This Athenian eſtabliſhment may bring to our minds one of the moſt celebrated inſtitutions in the legal polity of Great Britain; and the experience of Engliſhmen, from the days of the immortal Alfred to the preſent times, can give the fulleſt teſtimony to the general

impartiality, ſteady juſtice, and ſingular excellence of our trial by jury.

Although the number of inhabitants both in Sparta and Athens was conſiderable, yet the number of thoſe who had a ſhare in the government was ſmall in proportion to the reſt. Solon claſſed his citizens in four diviſions, the rich according to their property were enrolled in the firſt, ſecond, and third; and to the fourth, which included the moſt indigent, was denied the participation of any employments in the ſtate. The number of ſlaves when compared to citizens was very large. From a computation made in the time of Demetrius Phalerius, it appears, that there were more than twenty thouſand Athenians qualified to vote in the public aſſembly; at the ſame time, the ſlaves in actual bondage amounted to twenty times that number[i]. Plutarch has enabled us to aſcertain the numbers of the Lacedemonians at one particular period, as he ſtates, that by the diviſion of their lands, a competent ſubſiſtence was procured for thirty-nine thouſand families. Their ſlaves appear not to have been fewer in proportion than thoſe of Athens, even after the cruel maſſacres to leſſen their

[i] B. C. 317.

number. It was not merely by the effects of conqueſt, that ſo many were reduced to a ſervile ſtate, as was the caſe of the unfortunate Helots; but many of the citizens of Athens were driven by extreme indigence to ſell themſelves to the wealthy.

Fully convinced how much ſuch employments would contribute to the welfare of his country, Solon gave the greateſt encouragement to agriculture and commerce; and thus pointed out to his countrymen the true and permanent ſources of comfort and opulence. Such was the liberal ſpirit of his laws, that the rich, while they exerted power, could not oppreſs the poor, who were allowed the enjoyment of conſiderable privileges. The tyrant Piſiſtratus and his ſucceſſors infringed this fair and equitable plan of government[k], and the ſtruggles of the Athenians for their rights in ſucceeding times, conſpired with other cauſes, to involve them in wars with the Perſians. Greater conceſſions, made to the populace at various times, contributed ſtill more to undermine the inſtitutions of Solon; and before the age of Demoſthenes, the ancient ſpirit of the conſtitution was extinguiſhed, and the whole direction of the ſtate was

[k] B. C. 560.

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abandoned to the arts of factious and venal demagogues.

The laws of Sparta and Athens produced, in the courſe of time, a ſuitable effect upon manners. The performances of the theatre, the popular aſſemblies, and the ſacred feſtivals, employed the inhabitants of Athens, while the Spartans, indulging in no amuſement or relaxation, were inceſſantly buſied in the exerciſes of war. The ſtreets of Athens reſounded with the lively notes of muſic, and their ſongs were dictated by the tender paſſions of pity and love; the poets of Sparta rehearſed only the ſtern virtues of departed heroes, or rouſed her ſons to martial exploits by the deſcription of battles, victory, and death. In Athens the ſportive ſallies of wit, and the gay images of fancy, gave a peculiar vivacity to ſocial intercourſe: the ſeriouſneſs of a Spartan was manifeſted in his cautious reſerve, his grave deportment, and the peculiar conciſeneſs of his ſharp and pointed repartee: the virtue of a Spartan was gloomy and auſtere; the diſſipation of an Athenian was engaging and amiable. The one was an illiterate ſoldier, whoſe character was formed by martial diſcipline alone; the other was a man of genius, of taſte, and of letters, who

enjoyed

enjoyed the advantages of refinement and knowledge. The moroſeneſs of the Spartan was increaſed by holding no intercourſe with other nations; whereas by the laws of Solon, ſtrangers were invited to Athens, and were admitted to all the privileges of citizens. In Athens, liberty of action was ſhewn in every indulgence of ſocial pleaſure; in Lacedemon, the ſpirit of ſociety, diveſted of its charms to amuſe and to enliven, was made ſubſervient to the affairs of the ſtate. The temper of Lacedemon was depreſſed by exceſſive ſubjection, while that of her rival, rendered arrogant and vain by licentiouſneſs, was remarkable for a reſtleſs activity, and a capricious fickleneſs. Impatient both of freedom and ſlavery, theſe great republics had no principles in common but glory and ambition; and they continually embarraſſed each other in the execution of their reſpective projects to obtain the ſovereignty of Greece. The ſpirit of independence however was for the moſt part predominant in the other ſtates; and the yoke either of Sparta or Athens was regarded as heavy and intolerable. Diſcordant as their reſpective intereſts were, a train of events ſucceeded, which cauſed them to ſuſpend their animoſities, to unite in a general alliance, and to equip their fleets,

and lead forth their armies, not only to repel a formidable invasion, but to avert the storm which threatened the destruction of their political existence.

Among the colonies of Greece, settled upon the coasts of Asia Minor, the Ionians occupied the most pleasant and fertile territories. In order to resist the force of the Persian power, which was exerted to crush their insurrection, they solicited the aid of Athens, their mother country. Reinforced by her assistance, they burnt the ancient city of Sardis; and although they were defeated after the accomplishment of this daring enterprise, the resentment of the Persian monarch was roused to inflict vengeance on the Athenians for their interference[1]. Such was the immediate cause of those memorable wars, which contributed to mature the martial genius of the Greeks; and the interesting accounts of which gave splendour, dignity, and glory, to the most authentic pages of their history.

The train of events, to which this dissension led, involved likewise the most important interests of the Persians; for the wars, begun

[1] Herodot. lib. vii. sect. 382. edit. Wesseling. Mitford, vol. i. p. 315.

upon

upon ſlight grounds with the Greeks, terminated at laſt in the ſubverſion of their empire.

IV. *The moſt glorious Age of Greece.*

Of all the expeditions recorded in ancient hiſtory, that which was carried on againſt Greece by the Perſians is mentioned as the moſt formidable, whether the great forces which were brought into the field, or the obſtacles which they ſurmounted previous to their engagement with their enemies, be conſidered. The minute and exact relation given by Herodotus[m] of the vaſt preparations made by Xerxes, and the ardour with which he purſued his romantic enterprize, contribute to raiſe the reputation and glory of his countrymen to the higheſt pitch, when we conſider the apparently inadequate means of their defence and reſiſtance. Yet what was the ſucceſs of the vain deſpot of innumerable hordes of undiſciplined barbarians, when oppoſed to the determined valour and confirmed diſcipline of regular armies, commanded by generals of conſummate talents and approved experience? The great Hiſtorian above mentioned will give us the moſt ſatisfactory anſwer to this queſtion.

[m] Herodot. lib. vii. ſect. 391, &c.

The

The ſignal victory obtained in the plains of Marathon over the Perſians, was effected by the ſagacity, experience, and valour of Miltiades[n]. The fall of Leonidas and his illuſtrious Spartans in the ſtraits of Thermopylæ taught Xerxes to reſpect their unexampled prowefs, and to regret a victory obtained over a ſmall band of heroes, by the loſs of the choiceſt ſoldiers of his army[o]. The Athenians, abandoning their native city, truſted their fortune to the ſea, and under the conduct of Themiſtocles engaged the fleet of Xerxes near the iſland of Salamis[p]. From a lofty throne on Mount Egialos, the Perſian monarch obſerved the fatal action, and witneſſed the total deſtruction of his vaſt navy. The battle of

[n] B. C. 490. Herodot. lib. vi. ſect. 109. Mitford, vol. i. c. 9.

[o] B. C. 480.

[p] B. C. 480. Mitford's Greece, vol. i. p. 389, &c. Herodotus, lib. viii. ſect. 485. Plutarch, vol. i. p. 280. 303.

"Salamis was called by Euripides a land rich in bees, and fertile in olives; and the predilection he diſcovers for this place juſtifies the opinion that he was born there. Thus it could at once boaſt of having given birth to the chief of tragic poets, as well as to Solon, the moſt illuſtrious of legiſlators; and this glory ſurely equalled that of a naval triumph, now ſo little intereſting; while the Iphigenia in Tauris, and the legiſlation of Solon are objects of univerſal admiration." De Pauw, vol. i. p. 56.

Platea eſtabliſhed the renown of Pauſanias, and his victory was rewarded with the rich ſpoils of the Perſian army. On the ſame day, the Greeks were equally ſucceſsful at the promontory of Mycale in Ionia, where they devoted the rich camp and powerful fleet of the enemy to the flames. Theſe ſignal events reſtored liberty to the faireſt portion of Aſia, where the Greek colonies were planted, and completely fruſtrated the deſigns of Xerxes to enſlave the nations of Europe. At a later period, the aſtoniſhing retreat of the ten thouſand, who had eſpouſed the cauſe of the younger Cyrus againſt his brother Artaxerxes, under the command of the youthful Xenophon [q], through a long track of hoſtile country, kept alive the ſpirit of ſuperiority, and taught Alexander the Great that the conqueſt of the Eaſt might be achieved by Grecian troops.

For half a century after the repulſe of the armies of Darius and Xerxes, Athens maintained without controul the preeminence of her power. The farther progreſs of the Athenians, in extending their dominions, was aſſiſted by colonization and commerce. Their navies rode the ſeas in triumph, and their mer-

[q] B. C. 354.

chants

chants exchanged the ſuperfluous productions of Attica for the choiceſt fruits of diſtant countries. The large and fertile iſland of Eubœa was numbered among their territories; their dominion extended over the Aſiatic coaſt for the ſpace of a thouſand miles, from Cyprus to the Thracian Boſphorus, and over forty intermediate iſlands. They planted colonies on the winding ſhores of Macedon and Thrace, and commanded the coaſts of the Euxine Sea from Pontus to Crim Tartary. Theſe trophies of naval power were erected, not over ignorant barbarians, but over men, who had the ſame language and laws, the ſame arts and lineage, who had every thing common with the victors, except ſkill in navigation, prudence in council, and proweſs in the field.

And here we pauſe, to contemplate the ſtriking qualities of thoſe chiefs, who diſtinguiſhed themſelves ſo much in the ſervice of liberty and Greece, when the Perſians were driven from her ſhores. The illuſtrious perſons, who moſt contributed to raiſe Athens to its higheſt pitch of martial glory were Miltiades, Themiſtocles, Cimon, and Ariſtides. Miltiades united the moſt acute penetration into the deſigns of the enemy, to a perfect acquaint-

acquaintance with his own army; and when it was neceſſary to hazard an engagement, he always diſplayed his talents in chooſing ſuch a field of battle as gave him a decided advantage. Themiſtocles acquired the greateſt renown by directing the whole attention of his countrymen to naval affairs, and ſecuring the command of the ocean. Ariſtides, equally illuſtrious for his integrity, ſteadineſs, and moderation, ſhared the glory of Miltiades in the plains of Marathon, and was eminently diſtinguiſhed by his military talents both at Salamis and Platea. By his judicious conduct he ſtrengthened the Grecian confederacy, and provided ample ſupplies for the continuance of the war. Cimon, equal in courage to Themiſtocles and Miltiades, and ſuperior in integrity of conduct, the liberal and diſintereſted benefactor of his indigent countrymen, brought the navy of Athens to ſuch a ſtate of perfection, and encountered the enemy with ſuch ſucceſs, that Perſia, degraded and beaten both by ſea and land, was confined to the limits of her own empire.

It is however melancholy, after viewing theſe illuſtrious perſons in the meridian of their fame, to remark the ſtorms of misfortune which obſcured and haraſſed ſome parts of

of their lives. Miltiades, perſecuted by a relentleſs faction, died in priſon of the wounds he had received in the ſervice of his country[r]. Ariſtides, Themiſtocles, and Cimon were condemned to exile; and Phocion, the deſpiſer of the gold of Alexander, and the ſucceſsful oppoſer of the Macedonians, ſuffered death by a decree of the people.—Such were the rewards beſtowed upon perſons the moſt eminent for military talents and public ſervices under a democratical government! The hatred even of that honourable ambition which was excited by the praiſe of the people themſelves, and encouraged by their moſt diſtinguiſhed favours;—the moſt trifling apprehenſion of an invaſion of their liberty, the jealouſy of aſpiring talents, and a temper capricious and volatile, hurried the popular aſſemblies of Athens into acts of cruelty, ingratitude, and oppreſſion, againſt their moſt deſerving patriots, and their greateſt benefactors.

Nor was leſs ſeverity in many inſtances exerciſed againſt artiſts and philoſophers. Phidias, the moſt excellent of ſculptors, was falſely accuſed of embezzling part of the gold he had received for decorating the ſtatue of

[r] Mitford, vol. i. p. 351. Vol. ii. p. 33. 85, &c.

Minerva,

Minerva, and closed his life in prison [s]. Anaxagoras, who founded the principles of a pure philosophy, upon an investigation of the works of nature, was prosecuted for a charge of impiety, and driven into exile. Even Socrates, his amiable and unoffending disciple, the reformer of the corrupt manners of youth, and the teacher of the most rational and sublime morality that ever was inculcated by a heathen sage, became the victim of party cabal and popular ridicule, and was condemned to suffer death [t].

These were not the only sufferers under a democratical form of government. The most numerous class of the inhabitants of Greece consisted of slaves—a description of persons, who without any regard to their possessing the same powers and faculties, both of body and mind, as their masters, were wholly abandoned to the mercy of their despotic will. They were employed in the most degrading occupations, and, without enjoying the privilege of appealing for redress to the civil magistrate, or speaking in their own defence in a court of justice, were upon the most trivial pretences, chastised with blows

[s] B. C. 432. [t] B. C. 400.

 and

and ſcourging, and condemned to the rack. No hopes of future good alleviated their hard condition; for although with a degree of refined policy their increaſe was encouraged, they had nothing to bequeath to their offſpring, but an inheritance of miſery, and a condition of degraded humanity worſe than that of the brute creation[x].

In Athens, it muſt be confeſſed, they were treated with leſs cruelty, allowed more freedom of conduct, and were in many caſes permitted to claim the protection of the laws. Their courage in war was ſometimes recompenſed by the gift of liberty: yet even in a ſtate which boaſted to be the nurſe of freedom, and the miſtreſs of refinement, there was a public ſlave market. The Spartans diſdained the occupations of agriculture and trade, and committed every low and mechanical employment to the

[x] Mitford, vol. i. p. 210. 254. 270. Plutarch's Lives, vol. i. p. 139. Potter's Antiquit. vol. i. p. 55. Ælian ſays expreſsly, that it was the common opinion of all Greece, that a terrible earthquake, which happened four hundred and ſixty-ſeven years before Chriſt, was a judgment from heaven upon the Spartans, for treating their ſlaves with cruelty. Hiſt. Var. lib. iii.

wretched

wretched deſcendants of the inhabitants of Helos, whoſe city they had raſed for refuſing to pay them tribute. In return for their faithful ſervices, theſe unfortunate men were treated in the moſt rigid and barbarous manner, and the dexterity with which their inhuman maſters could ſurpriſe and deſtroy an enemy by ambuſcade, was frequently practiſed upon their wretched domeſtics, while labouring in large parties in the fields.

The conduct of the Greeks to their ſlaves ſeems to prove, that they eſteemed liberty and its bleſſings their own excluſive privilege. It is indeed a ſingular inconſiſtency in their character, that at the time when they were exerciſing deſpotic ſway over their wretched domeſtics, the orators were employed in the moſt ſevere invectives againſt arbitrary power, and all Greece was rouſed to oppoſe the tyrants of Perſia and Macedon. Rome alſo, even in the periods of her hiſtory moſt remarkable for the extent of knowledge, refinement, and civilization, boaſted of the multitude of her ſlaves. Their wrongs and their afflictions fixed a ſtain upon the nation equally indelible with that of Greece. In modern times, the ſame nefarious inſtitution has been continued, but attended with cir-

cumſtances of cruelty reſpecting the modes, by which ſlaves are procured, which would put a Roman, or a Greek, to the bluſh. The innocent and wild natives of the foreſts and deſerts are ſnatched from their beloved ſhores, torn from every tender connexion, and condemned to impriſonment and chains, during a long and painful voyage, which is only a prelude to greater afflictions. The lamentations of Africa, for the loſs of her unoffending natives, are heard from Guinea to the Cape of Good Hope. The eternal laws of juſtice, the tears of humanity, and the mild and merciful principles of Chriſtianity, call for a ceſſation of this infamous traffic in human fleſh. But the greedy Europeans, even thoſe who diſgrace the names of Proteſtants and of Engliſhmen, liſten only to the voice of avarice and rapacity: the injured ſufferers are ſtill condemned to drag the galling chains of bondage, and many of their rigid maſters are ſtill regardleſs of their entreaties, their ſufferings, and even of their deſpair.

V. *Grecian Women.*

The Grecian women continued to be kept in ſecluſion and retirement, even in the moſt refined times, from a reſpect to ancient cuſtoms. Their reſidence was limited to a remote

mote part of the houſe, which took its name from its particular deſtination to their uſe; they were viſited by no perſons but their neareſt relations, and when they went from home, they were obliged by law to be attended by a ſlave, carrying a lighted torch. Their time was engaged by the employments of the diſtaff and the ſhuttle, and by the care of bringing up their children. Such a mode of life was not only calculated to inſpire them with modeſty and diffidence, which is natural to perſons unaccuſtomed to promiſcuous converſation, and public life, but to cheriſh the growth of all domeſtic virtues. One of the greateſt orators of Athens gives a lively idea of this recluſe ſtate, by aſſerting, that it was the higheſt honour to a woman not to be the object either of public praiſe or cenſure. Amid the turbulent concerns of democratical government, and the activity of military expeditions, no leiſure was found for the ſexes to improve the arts of converſation, enlarge the ſphere of their knowledge, and poliſh their manners. In conſequence of this neglect, the Greeks were as deficient in delicacy and politeneſs, as they were remarkable for wit and learning. The female character was degraded, the paſſion of love was coarſe and indelicate, and the women were looked upon

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rather as the slaves than the equals of men. Their education was totally neglected, and little value was set upon those female accomplishments, which, combined with the charms of beauty, and native elegance of mind, have so much influence in improving the manners of the moderns [y].

It seems probable that this may be relied upon as a just picture of the modest women of Athens. During the period we are considering, courtesans skilled in all the arts of seduction were numerous throughout Greece, and their profession was countenanced by men of the first eminence [z]. The beautiful Aspasia, born at Miletus, the chief city of Ionia, was the first who introduced Asiatic elegance into Europe. She had the gratification to add Pericles to the list of her admirers, and gained so complete an ascendency over him, that he was accused of engaging his country in wars to avenge her quarrels. Under his sanction, she formed a society of courtesans, whose arts were employed to attach the young Athenians to her interest. Such were the charms of her conversation, that Socrates

[y] Mitford, vol. ii. p. 119. Anacharsis, vol. i. p. 438. Millar's Origin of Ranks, p. 113.

[z] B. C. 440.

himſelf, his accompliſhed pupil Alcibiades, the men of letters, and the moſt celebrated artiſts, frequently repaired to her houſe. This circumſtance may furniſh a proof of the low ſtate of mental accompliſhments in the virtuous part of the ſex, even during the moſt refined period of Grecian hiſtory.

The ſplendid train of ſucceſs, which rewarded the valour of Athens in the fifth century before Chriſt, forms the moſt glorious era in her annals. In the early parts of this hiſtory, it is neceſſary to have recourſe to very obſcure and uncertain accounts to ſatisfy our inquiries: ſometimes we muſt be content with the deſcriptions of poets, and the fables of tradition, and we muſt acquieſce in conjecture, where authentic memorials are not to be obtained. But with reſpect to this illuſtrious period, the difficulty conſiſts rather in the ſelection, than in the diſcovery of materials. The treaſures of information are rich and various, as theſe topics of ancient glory have been recorded by the diligence of hiſtorians, adorned by the eloquence of orators, and heightened by the invention of poets. The light of genius diffuſes its moſt ſplendid radiance over objects, which were not only endeared to all the writers of Greece by the

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attachment of patriotiſm, but ſupplied the beſt foundations for their literary fame. The triumphs obtained over the Perſians are conſecrated to endleſs renown by the works of Æſchylus, Lyſias, Iſocrates, Demoſthenes, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon [a].

Our ſurpriſe, when we remark the ſmall number of thoſe Greeks, who on ſuch diſtinguiſhed occaſions vanquiſhed very ſuperior numbers of Perſians, will be diminiſhed, when we conſider the comparative ſtate of military education and diſcipline. The Greeks acquired by their gymnaſtic exerciſes a robuſt conſtitution, and agility of limbs [b]. Thoſe who ſignaliſed themſelves in the battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Platea, had before obtained crowns of victory at the public games. There the flame of emulation was kindled, which afterwards burned with irreſiſtible ſtrength in the field of battle. The ſucceſsful competitor for the crown of victory, by hurling the ſpear, or driving the chariot, obtained no leſs renown for himſelf than he reflected on his family and his coun-

[a] Æſchylus flouriſhed B. C. 485. Herodotus 445. Thucydides 426. Lyſias 412. Xenophon 400. Iſocrates 377. Demoſthenes 350.

[b] Goguet's Origin of Laws, vol. iii. p. 234.

try;

try; and he was exalted in the opinion of the applauding multitudes to the summit of human felicity. The post of honour in battle was the reward of his courage, alacrity, and skill in the Olympic contests. Their frequent exercise in war enured the Greeks to hardships and fatigue, and accustomed them to those rapid movements in the field, which frequently decided the fate of armies. Their close and firm phalanx, formed of the most robust and hardy youth in the front ranks, and the most steady veterans in the rear, was scarcely to be resisted by any superiority of undisciplined numbers. Upon their heads they wore helmets of iron, their bodies were covered with coats of mail and protected by massy bucklers, their legs were fenced with brazen greaves, and their offensive weapons were two edged swords, and long spears [c].

The Persians on the contrary, in comparison with the troops of Greece, formed only an irregular crowd, composed of various nations. Their weapons of attack were darts

[c] Travels of Anacharsis, vol. ii. p. 134. 167. Mitford's Greece, vol. i. p. 366. and the curious passage quoted from Æschylus, who is said to have fought at Marathon, Salamis, and Platea.

and

and arrows, their left hands ſupported light targets of oſier, upon their heads they wore ſilken turbans, and their bodies were covered with plates of thin metal. But their inferiority, when compared with their enemies, was in no reſpect ſo manifeſt, as in the want of emulation and public ſpirit. Their minds were enervated by the enjoyment of wealth and luxury, and fettered by the bondage of tyranny. They were inſenſible to that love of glory, which fired the breaſt of every Grecian ſoldier, and prompted him to ſeek the field of battle, as the proper ſphere for the exerciſe of his talents.

CHAPTER V.

The History of Greece continued.

Arts and Literature.

THE ſame ſpirit of competition which rouſed the Grecian cities to contend for victory and renown, excited them to a rivalry of talents. As ſoon as the apprehenſions of danger from the inroads of barbarians were removed, they began to cultivate the arts of elegance; and the defeat of the Perſian power, and the death of Alexander the Great, containing an intermediate ſpace of 180 years, diſplayed the genius of Greece ſhining with its brighteſt ſplendour. Emulation was the ſtrong incentive which animated their ſouls with ſublime conceptions, and kept their attention conſtantly fixed upon that divine image of ideal beauty, which they ſtrove to expreſs in their productions. The name of the painter and the ſculptor was celebrated in feſtivals; their works were exhibited at the public games, and they were reputed to confer, by every ſpecimen of their art, diſtinguiſhed honour upon their country. The monuments of their talents reflected luſtre upon

upon their character, and gave it the highest respectability; as it was their noble province to express the likeness of heroes, and to embody the perfections of the gods[a]. To be publicly distinguished with higher honours than his competitors, was the great object of the artist, and his unremitting and ardent efforts to excel them gave to his works that grace, beauty, and spirit, that exquisite expression of passions, and appropriate dignity of character, which mark the Venus of Medici, the Apollo Belvidere, and the Laocoon. And if the opinion of some modern connoisseurs be well founded, that these admirable statues are the productions of later artists, what must we conclude the originals of such masterly

[a] For the causes of the superiority of the Greek artists, see Winkelmann's elegant and pleasing work, tom. ii. p. 1, &c. A beautiful chapter on the Origin, Progress, and Decline of Arts in Greece may be found in tom. i. p. 37, tom. ii. c. 1. For a beautiful description of the Venus de Medici see Spence's Polymetis, p. 66. Winkelmann, tom. ii. p. 75.—the Apollo Belvidere, Spence, p. 83. Winkelmann, tom. iii. p. 195.—the Laocoon, Winkelmann, tom. i. p. 68.

"The most famous apographum of our day is the Venus of Medicis. The attitude of this statue, like the works of Polycletus, proves it to be a copy of the Venus of Gnidus, and the inscription it bears is regarded by Mr. Marietti as another forgery." Pauw, vol. ii. p. 70.

copies

copies to have been? Certainly ſuch as to raiſe our ideas to the higheſt pitch of attainable perfection.

The arts called forth by the moſt lively images the great events and characters of hiſtory. Every public edifice in Athens was filled with the ſtatues of warriors, magiſtrates, legiſlators, philoſophers and orators. In one place ſtood Miltiades, frowning deſtruction on Perſia; in another, the placid Socrates, the thoughtful Solon, and the empaſſioned Demoſthenes. Every ſtreet preſented an Athenian with ſome ſtriking example of valour, wiſdom, or patriotiſm. Wherever he turned his eyes, he ſaw ſome monument raiſed to perpetuate the renown of his anceſtors; and the precious tribute of the arts, ſo liberally paid to all perſons of genius, courage, and virtue, gave the keeneſt incitement to the diſplay of every ſpecies of excellence[b].

[b] Winkelmann diſtinguiſhes the ſtyles of ancient art. One ſpecies he calls the *high ſtyle*, for which the works of Phidias, Polycletus, and Myron were celebrated. Their principal object was to combine beauty with ſublimity. Their figures diſcovered a certain hardneſs of execution, when compared with the flowing contour, and elegant forms of their ſucceſſors. A ſpecimen of this high ſtyle is the Pallas of the Villa Albani, and the Niobe and her daughters,

Thus is displayed to our view a prospect most delightful to every cultivated mind; for we behold Greece in her most flourishing state, adorned by literature, arts and sciences. The nature of the country was congenial with the temper of its inhabitants, and their eyes were familiarised to rapid streams, craggy mountains, venerable forests, and fertile vales. Romantic objects, presented to them on all sides, waked the enthusiasm of the mind, and charmed the imagination. Greece indeed exhibited a most extraordinary scene; for at a period, when all surrounding nations were obscured by intellectual darkness, and were barbarous and unpolished, her sons unfolded the full powers of their transcendent genius. Their active intellect, not enervated by the luxuries of refinement, nor distracted by a multiplicity of objects, exerted itself with

daughters of the Villa de Medicis. Another species is the *fine style*, distinguished from the former by grace. It commenced with Praxiteles, and gained its height under Lysippus and Apelles, in the reign of Alexander the Great. Of this species are the Zephyr, expressive of tranquil joy, in the act of gently waving his wings: the Leucothoe of the Capitol, and the heads upon the medals of the isle of Naxos. Other examples are, a Muse larger than life, in the Barberini Palace, and another Muse in the Pope's Gardens on the Quirinal Hill. Winkelmann, Art d'Antiquit. tom. ii. p. 219.

ardour,

ardour, followed up many of its inventions with perſeverance, and ſoared to the moſt aſtoniſhing heights of the beautiful, and the ſublime. To other countries they were doubtleſs indebted for ſome rude and imperfect eſſays of art, ſcience, and philoſophy; but it was their peculiar glory to ſhape them into beauty, and methodiſe them into ſyſtem.

The great Father of Epic ſong firſt invoked the muſes, charmed the ear with the matchleſs harmony of his numbers, and preſented in his incomparable works the moſt ſtriking pictures of ancient manners, the niceſt diſcriminations of character, and the moſt beautiful proſpects of nature[c]. To the invention of a poet, he unites the feelings of a philanthropiſt. He celebrates the arts which ſuſtain and adorn human life, and breathes the moſt lively ſentiments of piety, patriotiſm, and ſocial affection. As he deſcribes thoſe miſeries of man which ſpring from diſhonour, diſcord, and war, there is an air of deep ſolemnity diffuſed over his poems; and in this reſpect,

[c] B. C. 907. For a glowing paſſage on the genius of Homer, the ſource of the beauties of the tragedy, painting, eloquence, and ſculpture of Greece, ſee Anacharſis, vol. i. p. 105.

as

as well as in his picture of primeval manners, there is a close affinity to the books of the Old Testament. His genius, like the Jupiter he describes, is supreme in majesty, when compared with that of all other poets, and is never exerted in a manner which harmonises so perfectly with its powers, as when he soars to the sublime. Among the numerous circumstances which may be related to his praise, it is surely not the least extraordinary, that the beauty and contrivance of his fables, the harmony of his numbers, and the various exertions of his genius elevated at once by one mighty effort the dignity of epic poetry to such a pitch of perfection, that almost all the merit of succeeding poets has consisted in following, without being able to overtake him.

The tragic muse gradually improved her charms, gained the full dignity of her character, and poured forth the native effusions of the passions. She animated the Greeks with that original spirit of dramatic excellence, which the Romans, however fond of theatrical exhibitions, found to be unattainable.

She first enlivened the scenes of Æschylus with

with wild ſublimity[d], gave beauty and grace to the poliſhed and energetic Sophocles, and taught Euripides to breathe his pathetic and moral ſtrains[e]. Comedy amuſed the Athenians in its ruder ſtate with the coarſe licentiouſneſs and broad humour of Ariſtophanes, and, in its more pleaſing and elegant garb, charmed them with the pure ſentiment and diverſified characters of Menander[f].

Lyric Poetry roſe to the bold and irregular flights of Pindar[g], or breathed in varied cadences the warm raptures of Sappho[h]. Theocritus[i] derived from his obſervations upon the rural manners and romantic ſcenes of Sicily, the beauties of lively and natural deſcription. The Greeks were the inventors of a ſpecies of muſic, the refined aſſociate of this kind of poetry, and it was improved by the enchanting ſtrains of ſimple melody.

Among the various branches of compoſition, an early attention was paid to hiſtory. Herodotus recorded the affairs of the ancient world, as well as ſome of the moſt glorious ſcenes of Grecian valour, in an eaſy and un-

[d] B. C. 485. [e] B. C. 433. [f] B. C. 320.
[g] Pindar 480. [h] Sappho B. C. 600. [i] Theocritus 282.

affected narrative [k]; and a model of authentic and accurate detail was given to mankind by the grave and impartial Thucydides. The divine Socrates allured his countrymen to virtue by the charms of familiar conversation, and brought the most useful kind of knowledge from the schools of philosophy to reform the manners of his countrymen. His labours to turn their attention from abstruse and frivolous speculations to the amendment of their conduct, form a curious epoch in the

[k] For a general account of the Greek historians, see Rollin's Arts and Sciences, vol. iii. p. 30.

Monboddo, in vol. iv. b. ii. c. 10. of his Origin and Progress of Language, has given a very excellent account of the style, history, and character of Herodotus. See likewise Warton on Pope, vol. ii. p. 385. and Athenian Letters, vol. i. p. 151. Herodotus seems at present to be rising into credit again, and recovering from the charge brought against him by Richardson, Sir. W. Jones, and Hume. The truth of many of his descriptions is confirmed by recent observations. When Volney the celebrated traveller treats of the pyramids, which, including the three large ones, amount to thirty or forty, at the distance of only four leagues from Cairo, the dimensions of not one of which have been accurately taken, though the structures are now 2647 years old, he establishes the opinion of their having been sepulchral monuments; and vindicates the testimony of Herodotus against the scepticism of the moderns, who try every thing by the taste and ideas of their contemporaries.

history of the human mind[l]. To two of his most enlightened disciples we are indebted for the interesting detail of his conversations, sentiments, and actions. Plato, who united the fancy of the poet with the wisdom of the moralist and the subtlety of the metaphysician, adorned the lessons of philosophy with the luxuriant flowers of fancy, and applied his ardent and deep speculations to trace the great author of the universe through the display of his works, and to prove the immortal nature of the soul[m]. Their respective defences or apologies, supposed to have been pronounced by their injured master, support the dignity of his character, coincide in the principal topics of vindication, and are strongly marked by the peculiar disposition of the writers. Xenophon the scholar, the warrior, and the sage, among other excellent productions recorded the retreat of himself and his brave countrymen through hosts of barbarous foes, and, combining the beauties of fiction with the traditions of history, portrayed in the elder Cyrus the character of an accomplished monarch. All his works are inter-

[l] For an excellent account of the philosophy of Socrates, see Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ, part. ii. p. 46. Gillies, vol. i. p. 476. and vol. ii, p. 94.

[m] B. C. 400.

 spersed

ſperſed with the moſt engaging ſentiments of morality, and charm with the matchleſs grace of genuine ſimplicity[n]. Ariſtotle, the moſt eminent ſcholar of Plato, did not embrace the ſublime opinions of his great maſter upon divine ſubjects, nor copy his florid ſtyle of writing[o]. His various works are remarkable for a ſimplicity and a ſeverity of compoſition. Authoritative and profound in all his opinions, he carried his indefatigable reſearches not only into natural, political, and moral ſubjects, but inveſtigated the principles of elegant literature, and applied his judgment to the critical examination of the various branches of poetry and eloquence. As a logician he reigned with deſpotic ſway over the ſchools of Europe for many ages, but by a revolution, common to human opinions, moſt of his works, in the preſent times, are more admired than ſtudied.

The liberty of Greece gave free ſcope to

[n] The pattern of perfect ſimplicity; every where ſmooth, harmonious, and pure; declining the figurative, the marvellous, and the myſtic; aſcending but rarely into the ſublime; nor then ſo much truſting to the colours of ſtyle, as to the intrinſic dignity of the ſentiment itſelf. Harris's Her. p. 423.

[o] Ariſtotle, B. C. 345.

the

the efforts of public ſpeakers. The Athenians were gratified with liſtening to the ſpeeches of the artful Lyſias, the bold Demades, the polite and empaſſioned Hyperides, the ſevere Lycurgus, and the diffuſe and learned Æſchines. But the palm of eloquence, thus contended for by his countrymen, is juſtly aſſigned to the celebrated author of the Philippics. Severe and majeſtic energy is the characteriſtic of the ſentiments and language of Demoſthenes [p]. He was too ſerious and too dignified to aim at the ornaments of ſtyle, except ſuch as were manly and appropriate; he was too impetuous to be diffuſe, and too eager for action to waſte his time upon the circuitous arts of mild perſuaſion. It was his great object to aſtoniſh by unexpected flaſhes of thought, to terrify by lively images of danger, and to convince by the moſt impreſſive, and moſt concluſive arguments. While he rouſed his ſlothful and procraſtinating countrymen to check the advances, and revenge the aggreſſions of a crafty and powerful enemy; his orations equally proved the degeneracy of their manners, and the ſublimity of his own genius. And what muſt have been the commanding power of his delivery, to which even Æſchines, his great and

[p] Demoſthenes 339.

 able

able rival, according to his own candid acknowledgment, could not do justice! The energy of his manner, the modulation of his voice, and dignity of his action, correſponded with the force and the compaſs of his reaſoning, and combined to form the orator, to whom is deſervedly aſſigned the foremoſt place in the records of eloquence[q].

To the Greeks we owe the improvement, if not the invention of grammar, logic, criticiſm, metaphyſics, arithmetic, geometry, medicine, aſtronomy, and juriſprudence; and the terms peculiar to each of theſe arts and ſciences, clearly point out the country from

[q] "The Roman orator is too florid and rhetorical, his figures are too ſtriking and palpable, the diviſions of his diſcourſe are drawn chiefly from the rules of the ſchools. The manner of Demoſthenes is more chaſte than that of Cicero. Could it be copied, its ſucceſs would be infallible over a modern aſſembly. It is rapid harmony exactly adjuſted to the ſenſe: it is vehement reaſoning, without any appearance of art: it is diſdain, boldneſs, anger, and freedom, involved in a continued ſtream of argument: and of all human productions, the orations of Demoſthenes preſent to us the models, which approach the neareſt to perfection." Hume's Eſſays, vol. i. p. 109. Travels of Anacharſis, vol. ii. p. 116. The character of his genius, vol. v. p. 184. Leland's Preface to his Tranſlation of Demoſthenes, 1ſt, 2nd, 3d, and 4th, Philippic, and 1ſt, 2nd, and 3d, Olynthiac Orations.

which we have derived them. The refined invention of builders embelliſhed their cities with thoſe regular, well-proportioned, and elegant edifices, which diſplayed the various forms of architecture. Athens was filled with veſtibules, porticos, temples, and theatres of matchleſs ſymmetry and grandeur; and the pencils of Zeuxis, Parrhaſius, and Polygnotus, and the chiſels of Alcamenes, Phideas, and Polycletus, decorated them with the moſt beautiful pictures, buſts, and ſtatues. The religion of the Greeks was peculiarly favourable to the exertions of artiſts, and their ſacrifices, aſſemblies, and proceſſions, were equally well adapted to painting, bas-relief, and ſculpture. Theſe artiſts animated the Parian marble, and gave life and paſſion to the glowing canvaſs. The continual view of the human body in the baths, and at the public games, was a leſſon to the artiſts, and a principle of refined judgment to the public. They copied nature in her faireſt ſhape, and moſt becoming attitude, and by combining the ſcattered beauties of various forms in one ſubject, gave no very inadequate repreſentation of that ideal excellence which filled their glowing imaginations. Theirs likewiſe was that exquiſite taſte, the conſtant companion of genius, which inſtantly ſelecting from

 either

either art or nature whatever was excellent, gave to their productions an irresistible charm: it was diffused even among the common people, and rendered them accomplished and refined judges of the various productions of the arts.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER VI.

The Subject continued.

AFTER ſuch a digreſſion as the foregoing, which, it may be preſumed, can require no apology, as the arts and literature of the Greeks, in their meridian glory, are the ſubjects of it; we unite the broken thread of hiſtory by remarking, that the memorable war of Peloponneſus derived its origin from the ambition of the Athenians, who were deſirous of humbling the pride of Sparta, and making their own city the centre of Grecian dominion[a]. As the Athenians poſſeſſed only a territory of 86 ſquare leagues of a barren ſoil, while that of the Spartans conſiſted of 250, they were compelled to make the moſt vigorous exertions to counterbalance, by any means, the ſuperior reſources of their rivals. To the diſgrace of a people ſo refined and civilized, this war was carried on with all the ferocity of Barbarians, and preſented a wide ſcene of calamity and diſtreſs, of cabal and civil diſcord, of miſconduct and cruelty. Athens was deſolated by a peſtilential fever,

[a] B. C. 431.

far

far more destructive than the sword of the enemy, yet it tended not to fix the volatile temper of her citizens upon any measures of peace[b]. The capricious Alcibiades held forth the possession of Sicily as a desirable object of conquest. To achieve this enterprise, the most splendid and powerful fleet that ever left the harbour of Athens, sailed for the bay of Syracuse under his command[c]. Becoming a prey to the intrigues of faction, he abandoned the expedition, and by flight shunned the fate to which he was sentenced. By his

[b] De Pauw, vol. i. p. 115. Thucydides, lib. ii. chap. 47, 48, &c. Edit. Bipont. tom. ii. p. 71.

"This disease afflicted the Athenians during the heat of summer. It is considered by Haller, and other modern physicians, as nothing more than a contagious fever. To seek in Ethiopia the origin of a disorder, so evidently arising from multitudes of men heaped and pressed together, would be absurd; especially as its influence did not extend beyond the walls of Athens, and was totally unknown in every other part of Greece." De Pauw, vol. i. p. 121.

The poets have shewn their approbation of this affecting account of the plague of Athens, by adopting many of its images into similar descriptions. Lucretius, book vi. ver. 1136, &c. Virgil in the third Georgic, ver. 478. and Æneid iii. ver. 137. and Ovid and Statius have all followed Thucydides. This is the substance of the remark of Fabricius, Bibl. Græc. lib. ii. chap. 25.

[c] Thucydides, lib. vi. chap. 19, 20, 22, &c.

advice,

advice, the Spartans reinforced the Syracusans, and the ſtorm of their united vengeance fell upon the Athenians; not a ſingle ſhip returned home, and a few only of the great numbers, who compoſed their army and navy, eſcaped death or captivity. For a ſtriking detail of theſe events, we are indebted to Thucydides, who, holding the rank of a commander in the early part of the war, was himſelf an eye-witneſs of many of the tranſactions which he has related. To his nervous deſcription of facts, he has added proofs of the ſplendid abilities which the great orators of this period diſplayed, and has reflected, what may perhaps be eſteemed no imperfect image of the fervid eloquence of Pericles on various occaſions; and more eſpecially when he pronounced a funeral oration upon the ſoldiers who had fallen in the ſervice of their country[d].

The irreſiſtible force of thunder, and the vivid flaſhes of lightning, were the figurative alluſions uſed to convey ideas of the eloquence of Pericles. His talents raiſed him to the ſole adminiſtration of public affairs, and he guided at his ſovereign diſpoſal a ca-

[d] Thucydides, lib. i. c. 22. lib. ii. c. 35.

pricious

pricious populace for fifteen years [c]. To the people he looked for diftinctions and honours, and to them he facrificed the principles of the ancient conftitution. The engine of his popularity was corruption. With the public money, originally deftined for the defence of Attica in cafe of invafion, he rewarded his countrymen for attending the public affemblies, and enabled every one of them, by the fanction of an exprefs law, to receive a gratuity for reforting to their favourite diverfions of the theatre. His fame would reft upon a very weak foundation, if it was only fupported by the fuccefs of his adminiftration, in bending the inclinations of his citizens to his own political plans, and facrificing their independence to his ambition.

But fortunately for his reputation he has the teftimony of the moft unbiaffed men in his favour; for, from the high encomium of Socrates, the anecdotes of Plutarch, and the candid and honourable teftimony of Thucydides, who was banifhed at his inftigation, we may juftly conclude that he was the patron of the arts; that as a public fpeaker he was moft eloquent; that as a ftatefman, his abilities were confummate; and that in

[c] B. C. 430.

the midſt of the cruelty and venality of his countrymen, he diſdained the acquiſition of wealth, and abhorred the practice of revenge.

Twenty-ſeven years put a period to the war of Peloponneſus, and extinguiſhed the glory of the Athenians. The burning of their fleet, and the demolition of thoſe walls of the city, the expence of which had been defrayed by the ſpoils and treaſures of the Perſians, atteſted the triumph of Lyſander, the ambitious, but uncorrupt general of the Spartans. Thraſybulus with a ſmall band of friends effected the expulſion of the thirty tyrants, and received an olive crown as the ſole reward of this heroic action. Cimon vindicated the honour of his diſgraced country, and after a ſignal defeat of the Lacedemonian navy, reeſtabliſhed its ancient government. While Athens was again riſing to glory and diſtinction, the Thebans, under the conduct of Epaminondas and Pelopidas, whoſe ſocial virtues and military talents did equal honour to their illuſtrious characters, checked the power of Sparta; and the battle of Leuctra rewarded their valour with complete ſucceſs. But the ſun of Theban greatneſs ſet at the battle of Mantinea, where Epaminondas

das expired in the arms of victory. Nor did Athens long enjoy the revival of her power; for Philip of Macedon, equally distinguished by the profligacy of his conduct and the greatness of his ambition, obtained the sovereignty of Greece, no less by intrigues and corruption, than by his prowess in the field. The victory of Cheronea extinguished the independence of the Grecian states, and the succeeding events laid the foundation of a new empire [f].

The most remarkable changes by slow degrees took place in the manners of the Athenians, and prepared the way for the introduction of the Macedonian, and afterwards of the Roman power. When, as Xenophon remarked, it was customary to adorn the feasts of Attica with the costly viands of Sicily and Asia Minor, the luxury of repasts became fatal to the manners of the people. Private extravagance kept pace with public profusion; instead of the bread, herbs, and simple fare, recommended by the laws of Solon, the Athenians availed themselves of their extensive commerce to import the dainties of distant coasts, which were served up with all the refinements of culinary art. In summer, the delicious wines of Cyprus were cooled

[f] B. C. 338.

with

with ſnow; and in winter, garlands of flowers, procured at great expence, adorned the tables, and encircled the heads of this luxuriant people. The martial ſongs of their anceſtors became unfaſhionable; and paraſites, dancers, and buffoons, crowded their ſumptuous feaſts. An exceſſive fondneſs for horſes, and the purſuits of the chaſe exhauſted the finances of the youths, who were vitiated by their intercourſe with harlots, or corrupted by the licentious philoſophy of ſophiſts. Diſdaining to cultivate the virtues of their progenitors, and blind to the encroachments of politic and enterpriſing enemies, they gave a looſe to luxury, and licentiouſneſs. The public revenues, which had been formerly expended in the equipment of fleets and armies, were laviſhed upon theatrical exhibitions, games, and feſtivals. Frivolous curioſity and tame irreſolution became the characteriſtics of a people, whom no ſenſe of danger or ſhame could rouſe to martial exertions, even when their enemies were ſtripping them of their moſt valuable territories, and advancing with rapid ſteps to Athens itſelf.

The death of Philip[f] induced the Athenians to throw off the Macedonian yoke.

[f] B. C. 335.

The alacrity of his renowned ſucceſſor was ſoon diſplayed in ſubduing, and his clemency in pardoning, their defection. The exploits of Alexander the Great, who undertook his expedition againſt Darius with a view to avenge the wrongs of Greece, form an intereſting portion of this period of hiſtory. Although the Greeks were deprived during his reign of their independence, yet they were left at full liberty to follow the dictates of their own inclinations, with reſpect to the cultivation of the arts, and even in martial affairs they ſhared the triumphs of the Conqueror of the Eaſt.

This great and accompliſhed Hero was himſelf diſtinguiſhed by a love of the arts and of literature: he patronized Lyſippus the moſt eminent ſtatuary, and Apelles the greateſt painter of his age; and he preſerved as his moſt invaluable treaſure, a copy of his favourite Homer, in a rich caſket found among the ſpoils of Darius. To the moſt extraordinary talents he united an ardent and uncontroulable temper, headſtrong paſſions, and an unquenchable thirſt for dominion. Although his conduct was tarniſhed with ſome atrocious ſallies of rage and cruelty, yet enlightened by the precepts of Ariſtotle, to whoſe judicious care his father Philip entruſted

trusted him, after paying that eminent philosopher the most distinguishing compliment a tutor ever received, he improved his extensive conquests to the general benefit of mankind. He built many cities in the most convenient situations, and introduced the civilization of Greece into barbarous countries. His life exhibited many splendid examples of clemency, humanity, and generosity, even amid the fervour of youth, and the impetuosity of victory. His race of glory was indeed short; but he outstripped all his competitors in his enterprises, as well as in his success. Even after making full allowances for the fictions and exaggerations of his flattering historians, the most authentic accounts of his life are sufficient to prove, if we recollect the brilliancy of his wit, his personal strength and courage, his talents for war, the vast elevation of his mind, and the extent of his rapid conquests, that he was one of the most extraordinary personages, whose history stands recorded in the annals of the world[g].

Some time after his death the Athenians solicited the protection of the Romans to shel-

[g] For a fine sketch of the character of Alexander the Great, which confirms the propriety of my statement, see Montesquieu, liv. x. c. 14.

ter them from the oppression of Philip, the second of that name, King of Macedon[h]. Governed in appearance by their own laws and magistrates, they were obliged to show the most obsequious attention to their protectors, in order to avoid being considered as the ungrateful abettors of rebellion and tumult.—The decisions for war or peace, the exactions of taxes, and all political regulations, were no longer left to their determination, but depended upon the decrees of the Roman senate. The spirit of the people however was bent to obedience; and that submission to foreign command, which in the days of a Miltiades, or a Cimon, would have been regarded as worse than death, was considered by the contemporaries of Polybius as an easy, and even a gratifying homage. Greece could however still claim the glorious superiority of being the Mistress of the arts, and of teaching them to the unpolished conquerors of the world. The Romans were gradually refined by the people they had subdued; and the captive Greek introduced taste, elegance, and literature among the rough warriors of Latium.

In the time of the civil wars of Rome[i],

[h] B. C. 190. [i] B. C. 50.

the

the Athenians, actuated by their ancient love of liberty, espoused the cause of Pompey, and afterwards of Brutus and Cassius; and they erected statues of these illustrious patriots near those of Harmodius and Aristogiton, who had slain the tyrant Hipparchus. Unfortunate upon both occasions in the part they took, they experienced the clemency both of Julius and of Augustus Cæsar. Athens was long celebrated as the abode of philosophy, and the seat of learning. Here Horace completed his education, and to this place the great Roman Orator sent his son to be instructed by Cratippus; and here likewise Pomponius, his accomplished and virtuous friend, from his residence in the country, and his proficiency in its literature, obtained the honourable appellation of Atticus.

That this place continued to be the seat of philosophy at a subsequent period, we learn from the eloquent address of St. Paul, so well adapted to the favourite pursuits and opinions of its inhabitants. And that their superstitious disposition still remained, was evident from their dedication of an altar to the Unknown God—they were influenced by the same eager pursuit of novelty, which had marked their character in the time of De-

 mosthenes,

moſthenes; and their taſte for the works of the poets was ſtill vigorous and correct. Under the mild empire of Trajan[k], they retained their fondneſs for the precious monuments of ſculpture, as Pliny mentions, that in his time Athens could boaſt of no leſs than three thouſand ſtatues. They found in Adrian a generous benefactor; he beſtowed upon them new privileges; and the city under his auſpicious influence reflected a faint ray of her former glory. It long continued to be the favourite abode of philoſophers; and when Syneſius of Alexandria, an elegant writer of the fifth century, viſited it, he remarked, that the celebrated colonnade or porch, from which the Stoic philoſophers had taken their name, had been ſtripped of its elegant pictures, and was deſerted by the followers of Zeno.

Alaric, the ſavage plunderer of Italy, extended his conqueſts to Greece, and marked his ſteps by ruin and devaſtation[l]. He paſſed the ſtraight of Thermopylæ, from which the Greeks retired as he advanced. As ſoon as the voice of his herald was heard at Athens, the deſcendants of thoſe heroes, who had conquered at Marathon and Salamis, opened their gates. What other proof need be mentioned

[k] A. C. 114. [l] A. C. 410.

of

of the degeneracy of the times? In the fourteenth century, Greece yielded to the victorious arms of Mahomet the ſecond, and continues in the poſſeſſion of the Turks to this day.

The preſent State of Greece.

The ravages of ſucceſſive conquerors have aſſiſted the ſlow but certain hand of time in haſtening the deſtruction of ancient Athens. Ever ſince the Turks have had the country in their poſſeſſion, they have exerted a wanton induſtry, and ſhown the natural hoſtility of ignorance to taſte, by mutilating ſtatues, demoliſhing temples, and defacing the elegant forms of ſculpture. The curious traveller, however, has ſtill ſufficient ſcope for the indulgence of his pleaſing melancholy, and for giving way to thoſe mixed ſenſations of ſorrow and delight, for which no language can ſupply an adequate name. Such are his feelings when his imagination preſents to him the Genius of ancient Greece, bound in the iron fetters of deſpotiſm, reclining his head amidſt broken arches and proſtrate columns, while liberty, the muſes, and the arts, are ſpeeding their flight from theſe unhappy regions. On an actual ſurvey of the ruins of Athens, the traveller may be ſurpriſed that

the ſight of ſuch objects did not open the eyes of the barbarian conquerors to admire the enchanting beauties of architecture. Every colonnade, portico, and pillar he beholds, nay, every ſtep he takes, cannot fail to carry back his fancy, without any violent effort, to diſtant periods, and lead him to combine remote events with preſent appearances. On the abrupt and craggy rock of the Acropolis was erected the magnificent temple of Minerva, famed for the golden ſtatue, which was one of the choiceſt productions of Phidias. It is now imperfectly repreſented only by huge maſſes of ponderous marble. From this ſpot may be diſtinctly ſeen, when the ſun gilds the horizon with his evening rays, the white column erected to Theſeus after the battle of Salamis. The renowned port of Athens, to which his triumphant fleet returned loaded with the ſpoils of the Perſians, is now diſtinguiſhed only by the traces of a ſmall theatre, and a monaſtery of mean architecture. The ruins of temples and theatres, intermixed with flat-roofed cottages, and marble tablets inſcribed with characters, which neither the ignorant Turks nor the modern Greeks can decipher, are melancholy memorials of a more noble and a more refined people. The marble fragments found among

the ruins of the ſchools atteſt the diligence of the ancient philoſophers, who inſcribed upon them the names of their ſcholars. The Odeum, which once reſounded with the notes of the lyre, and the ſublime ſtrains of the choral ſong, can at preſent be traced only by its lofty and broken wall, and is deformed by the rude outwork of a Turkiſh caſtle[m]. The ſhores of Attica are waſte and deſolate; few villages are to be ſeen from Eleuſis to the promontory of Sunium, and thence even to the plains of Marathon. The eye of the inquiſitive traveller diſcerns nothing but ſcattered ruins along a coaſt of eighty miles in extent. Nature herſelf ſeems, in ſome reſpects, to ſympathize with the gloomy deſolation of the place; for the once cool and pure Iliſſus, on whoſe margin Socrates reclined to converſe with his diſciple Phedrus, pours a ſcanty and impure ſtream; and its banks, once ſhaded with lofty and waving planes, are now bare and unfruitful.

Every ſcholar and every man of taſte feels a melancholy pleaſure in forming this contraſt, which he is enabled to make in conſequence of the diligent reſearches of Wheler, Spon, and Chandler. But he may receive a

[m] Chandler's Travels, p. 78, 85, &c.

more lively ſatisfaction from the reſearches of Stuart, who from fragments of buildings and broken pillars has traced ſuch plans and elevations of the original buildings, and explained them ſo clearly by his diſſertations, as to give a very expreſſive repreſentation of the city in its ancient ſtate of elegance and grandeur.

However the inhabitants of Athens are depreſſed by their haughty tyrants, they ſtill retain ſtrong marks of their original character. They poſſeſs much of that quickneſs of apprehenſion, vivacity of temper, and urbanity of manners, which diſtinguiſhed their anceſtors[n]. The native character of the peo-

[n] Eton's Survey, p. 334, &c. Chandler, p. 117, 120. Stuart's Athens. "Ils ont une politeſſe d'eſprit naturelle, et beaucoup d'adreſſe dans toutes les affaires qu'ils entreprennent." Spon, vol. ii. p. 76, 92. Wheler, p. 356.

For an animated vindication of the character of his countrymen from the charge of ſtupidity and want of ſpirit, ſee the eloquent addreſs of the learned Dr. Couray in his Diſcours Préliminaire to his Tranſlation of Hippocrates. The concluſion of it is ſo animated, and written ſo much in the ſpirit of a countryman of Homer, that I cannot withhold from my Reader the pleaſure of peruſing it.

"Des deſpotes tranſplantés de l'ancienne Rome, après avoir par une adminiſtration auſſi ſtupide que tyrannique relâché tous les reſſorts de la ſociété, entravé l'influence

du

ple long continues like the peculiarity of the ſoil, which is the ſame as it was of old; Attica is ſtill famed for olives, grapes, and figs; and the neighbouring ſlopes of Hymettus ſtill abound with bees, which produce moſt delicious honey. But a long ſtate of ſervitude and ſuperſtition has degraded the native powers of their minds; and the recollection or the fear of blows and indignities, too often inflicted by their tyrants, makes them ſtoop to the artifices of cunning and diſſimulation. The Albanians, a hardy and courageous race, who keep flocks upon the purple declivities of Hymettus and Citheron, or gather olives on the green banks of the Cephiſſus, are deſcended from the Spartans. Their patience

du plus beau des climats, ſouillé, ébranlé leur trône par les crimes les plus affreux, ont fini par vous livrer à des tyrans, encore plus ſtupides et plus féroces. Ce ſont eux qui ont forgé des chaines que vous portez, nation malheureuſe, mais reſpectable dans votre malheur! Ce ſera vous qui les briſerez. En attendant cet heureux moment, qui ſans doute n'eſt pas éloigné, vous pouvez avec confiance adreſſer à vos tyrans ce qu'un de nos poetes fait dire à la vigne rongée par un animal dévaſtateur,

Κὴν με φαγῃς επι ῥιζαν, ὁμως ετι καρποφορησω,
'Οσσον επισπεισαι σοι, τραγε, θυομενῳ." P. 180.

My claſſical Readers will no doubt recollect the parallel paſſage, or rather the tranſlation, in Ovid.

Rode caper, vitem: tamen hinc, cum ſtabis ad aram,
In tua quod fundi cornua poſſit, erit.

of

of fatigue, and their desperate bravery, which has been sometimes roused by extreme oppression, prove the justness of their pretensions to such an origin. When we observe that the sparks of original genius and courage are still extant among this people, it must excite a wish, that captives so undeserving and unfortunate could be assisted to break their chains. Far from being admitted to any privileges whatever, which can bring them upon an equality with their masters, they are kept in the most abject servitude, and continue in the same miserable state as when they were first conquered. They retain the same rights they ever had to shake off the Turkish yoke, and to assert their claims to independence. The frequent wars between the Russians and the Turks might afford them the glorious opportunity of emancipation; and no enterprise could be more worthy of the Emperor who now fills the throne of Russia, than to assist their courageous efforts in a manner more vigorous and effectual, than was done in the late war between his predecessor Catharine and the Turks. The fate of the brave inhabitants of Poland extinguishes the hope of restoration to complete independence from that quarter: but the government of Petersburgh would doubt-

doubtleſs be more tolerable than that of the Porte, if we conſider the different ſpirit of its religious creed, and its more advanced ſtate of civilization. If the modern Greeks could be placed in ſo advantageous a ſituation, the prediction of Peter the Great might be verified; and the arts, which have civilized northern Europe, might return, after having taken an extenſive circuit, to enlighten and adorn the country of their birth.

"I cannot better compare the tranſmigration of ſcience than to the circulation of blood in the human body; and I foreſee that they will one time or other forſake England, France, and Germany, and ſettle among us for many ages, to return again into Greece, their firſt abode [o]."

When we recal the days of Grecian glory, during which the arts of peace and war roſe to the greateſt height, when patriots, ſtateſmen, philoſophers, poets, and artiſts, were ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed for virtue, wiſdom, and elegance, we cannot help indulging a wiſh, that the inhabitants of the ſame de-

[o] From the Speech of the Czar Peter, Memoirs of Literature, vol. i. p. 361.

lightful and interesting regions could be allowed to give full scope to their original genius, and that the descendants of an Aristides, an Agesilaus, a Socrates, and a Leonidas, could not only be permitted to enjoy the inheritance of their illustrious ancestors, without extortion and without slavery, but be encouraged to emulate their fame.

For the assistance of the memory in chronological arrangements, we may distinguish the remarkable periods of Grecian history by four memorable epochs. The first is the age of Solon, or the establishment of the laws; the second is the age of Aristides, or of martial glory; the third of Pericles, or of luxury and the arts; and the fourth, that of Mahomet II. or complete degradation.

Enough may be collected from the foregoing detail to ascertain "that the commonwealths of Greece, while they maintained their liberty, were the most heroic confederacy that ever existed. They were the politest, the bravest, and the wisest of men. In the short space of a little more than a century, they became such statesmen, warriors, orators, historians, physicians, poets, critics, painters,

painters, ſculptors, architects, and laſt of all philoſophers, that one can hardly help conſidering that *golden period* as a providential event in honour of human nature, to ſhow to what perfection the ſpecies might aſcend [p]."

On looking back to thoſe times, when the Greeks carried their various inventions and improvements to ſuch perfection, we cannot fail to acknowledge the obligations, which ancient Rome and modern Europe have been under to them. Greece has been the inſtructreſs of the civilized world. To her indeed all poliſhed nations are deeply indebted for holding out the light of genius, philoſophy, and taſte, to guide their ſteps in the cultivation of the moral and intellectual powers of the mind.

Emulation was the great incentive to exertion in every branch of art, and every ſcene of action. All attempts were carried to the utmoſt pitch of attainable perfection. The trophies of Miltiades did not ſuffer Themiſtocles to ſleep; and the applauſe beſtowed upon Herodotus at the Olympic games ſtimulated

[p] Harris's Hermes.

Thu-

Thucydides to compoſe his immortal work. The efforts of genius are not confined to ſervile imitation, for genius may ſtrike into innumerable paths. The Greeks have ſhown us that excellence even of the higheſt order is attainable; and it remains for us, if we poſſeſs any capacity, if we are animated by ambition, and impelled by a ſpirit of enterpriſe like theirs, to make repeated and unremitting exertions, until our endeavours terminate as theirs have done, in new and uſeful diſcoveries, and improvements in the various branches of art, ſcience, and literature.

The hiſtory we have been conſidering cannot fail to ſuggeſt to an Engliſh reader various points of reſemblance to the ſtate and circumſtances of his own country. The ſtruggles for power, and the intrigues of parties and popular leaders, the ardent love of liberty, and high pretenſions to domination, occaſionally ſinking into ſubſerviency, and then again rouſing from tame acquieſcence to new claims, new jealouſies, and the moſt active exertions of power, and the moſt ſtrenuous vindication of rights; the tendencies of the ſtate to great acceſſion of empire, and the obſtacles to a continuance of diſtant and

and widely ſpread dominion; the gradual increaſe of power and opulence from ſources of commerce; the conſequent ſpirit of diſſipation, and prevalence of luxury, tending to diſſolve the very ſtrength and proſperity they gave birth to—theſe circumſtances, connected with the political career of a free government, and the civil concerns of a commercial and maritime country, are no where more fully diſplayed than in the hiſtory of the republic of Athens.

The cloſer and more exact reſemblance between Attica and Great Britain is diſcernible in our diligent cultivation of the arts and ſciences, in the eloquence of our public ſpeakers, the bravery of our ſailors, and the ſkill and valour of our admirals and generals. While we are eager to eſtabliſh this reſemblance, ſo flattering to our national pride; and whilſt our Iſland reflects the image of the architecture, ſculpture, literature, and taſte, which ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed the Greeks; and we ſurpaſs them in navigation, commerce, ſcience, and philoſophy; let us be extremely careful, that our characters and manners have no mixture of the factious ſpirit, levity, corruption, and degeneracy, which

marked

marked the decline of their glory; but that we emulate the virtue, valour, patriotiſm, and refinement of their greateſt men, and pureſt times.

CHAPTER VII.

The History of Rome.

WITH respect to the eminent character and the political importance of the Romans, their history is more splendid than that of any other country. Like the sculptured column of Trajan, it is a monument of triumphs. It is more uniform than that of Greece, displays greater vicissitudes of affairs, and records the lives of an equal, if not a greater number of illustrious warriors and statesmen. The Romans established their empire not so much by the smiles of fortune, as by the persevering efforts of wisdom and valour. They were extraordinary both in the nobleness and in the debasement of their character; for in their progress to dominion, they exercised virtues, which far exceeded, and in the decline of their empire, they were disgraced with vices, which fell much below the common standard of human nature.

The prospect of Rome, at the period of its greatest power, cannot fail to impress our minds with astonishment. At the time when the

the warlike and virtuous TRAJAN filled the imperial throne, the Romans had reached the ſummit of dominion, refinement, and magnificence. The metropolis of the empire and its ſuburbs extending beyond the ſeven celebrated hills, were bounded by a circumference of fifty miles. More populous than Babylon, Nineveh, or Thebes, or any capital of modern Europe, the number of its inhabitants amounted to twelve hundred thouſand [a]. It abounded with manſions remarkable for height and ſpaciouſneſs; it was interſperſed with gardens and groves, and was decorated with every edifice, which could contribute either to the uſe or ornament of individuals, or of the public. Fountains, baths, aqueducts, bridges, markets, obeliſks, ſquares, courts of juſtice, porticos, palaces, amphitheatres, and temples, filled the auguſt proſpect. The temple of Ops was enriched with the

[a] Upon the ſubject of the extent and the population of Rome there is a very curious note in Brotier's Tacitus, vol. ii. p. 373. 4to. edit. He ſtates at large the data, upon which his calculation of the inhabitants reſts. There is a curious diſſertation upon this ſubject in the Memoires de l'Académie des Inſcriptions, tom. xxx. p. 191. by M. D'Anville. The only capital in the known world more populous than ancient Rome is Pekin in China, which Du Halde reckons at three millions.

gold of ſubdued monarchs; the roſtra were decked with the naval ſpoils of a long ſucceſſion of ages; and upon the lofty arches were deſcribed, in the moſt exquiſite ſculpture, the various victories and ſplendid triumphs of the conquerors of the world. Among the public buildings were more particularly obſerved by the eye of the aſtoniſhed ſpectator, the elegant forum of Trajan, the ample theatres of Marcellus and Pompey, the temple of Neptune, the wide circumference of the Circus Maximus, the Capitol rearing its majeſtic ſtructures above the Tarpeian Rock; the imperial Palace, which overlooked the whole city from its magnificent portico; the temple of Apollo, diſtinguiſhed by the coloſſal ſtatue of that deity, erected upon the Palatine Hill in the centre of the city; and the dome of the ſublime Pantheon, eminent for its incomparable ſymmetry, and regular proportions. All theſe buildings preſented the ſolid ſtyle of the Tuſcan, or the more elegant orders of Grecian architecture, and were adorned with the moſt beautiful productions of painting and ſtatuary. Above theſe ſtately edifices aroſe a lofty pillar of white marble, exhibiting, in the moſt lively images of ſculpture, the Dacian victories of Trajan, whoſe coloſſal figure crowned the ſummit. The

 extent,

extent, the variety, and the grandeur of these buildings proved, that this city was the residence of the masters of the world, as the ingenuity, the productions, the arts, and the riches of all countries conspired to aggrandize and embellish it.

Twenty thousand select troops, either distinguished as regular patroles, or prætorian cohorts, watched both night and day over the security of this populous and spacious city. To this seat of supreme power ambassadors were sent from the most remote regions, to lay the diadems of Kings at the feet of the Emperor. From hence marched the proconsuls, lieutenants, and prætors, surrounded by numerous trains of attendants, and escorted by cohorts of foot and squadrons of horse, to take the command of their respective provinces. They travelled over straight and spacious roads, which intersected the empire in every direction, and which were so solid and durable, as to remain in many places unimpaired by the ravages of time, after the lapse of more than seventeen centuries[b]. The ready communication between one province

[b] Campbell's Political Survey, vol. ii. p. 250. Gibbon, vol. i. p. 51. Lumisden, p. 86. Horsley's Britannia Romana, p. 520.

and another was equally ſecured by ſea and by land; and the fleets, which anchored in the port of Oſtia, were prepared to carry the imperial arms to the moſt diſtant coaſts. Upon the banks of great rivers, ſuch as the Rhine, the Danube, and the Po, in the vicinity of populous cities, or on the frontiers of hoſtile nations, were ſtationed the camps of the legions. At the firſt alarm of inſurrection they were ready to take the field; no plot of the enemy could eſcape their vigilance, and no force was ſufficient to repel their formidable onſet. Many of the temperate and fertile countries, which now compoſe the moſt powerful kingdoms of Europe, were enrolled in the regiſter of tributary ſtates. The imperial eagle ſtretched her wings over the faireſt portions of the ancient world. The empire was extended more than two thouſand miles in breadth, from the wall of Antoninus in Britain, and the northern limits of Dacia, to Mount Atlas in the weſt of Africa, and reached in length more than three thouſand miles, from the Weſtern Ocean to the Euphrates. It was ſuppoſed to contain above ſixteen hundred thouſand ſquare miles, for the moſt part of fertile and well-cultivated land. It included Spain and Portugal, Gaul and Britain, Italy, Germany, Hungary, Tranſylvania, Thrace, Macedonia, Greece, the provinces of

 Aſia,

Aſia, Minor, Pontus, Bithynia, Cilicia, Syria, Phœnicia and Paleſtine, Egypt, Mauritania, and Dacia. All theſe countries abounded with large and opulent cities, every one of which atteſted the progreſs and influence of the arts, as well as the dominion of the Romans, by the grandeur and variety of its public works. The population of the empire was equal to its extent, as it was reputed to contain not leſs than one hundred and twenty millions of ſubjects, a number greater than was ever, either before or after that period, united under one European government.

If we conſider the modern world with reference to the Roman empire, even the dominions of the Great Mogul, or the more extenſive territories of the Grand Signior, far as they are ſpread in Europe, Aſia, and Africa, ſink in compariſon with it. Ruſſia in point of comparative population is a deſert; and China, with its myriads of inhabitants, with reſpect to martial energy, is a nation of effeminate ſlaves.

Such is the ſublime proſpect of the metropolis, the naval and military force, and the extenſive and formidable ſovereignty of ancient Rome in the meridian of her glory. A ſurvey

vey ſo remarkable for the variety and the ſplendour of its objects, is the moſt diſtinguiſhed, which hiſtory has preſented to the contemplation of man. It will appear the more extraordinary, if we contraſt the empire ſo extenſive and flouriſhing under Trajan, with its parent ſtate, conſiſting of a ſmall colony of ſhepherds and adventurers, originally planted by Romulus upon the banks of the Tiber, and forming one of forty-ſeven independent cantons, which altogether occupied a ſpace of only fifty miles[c].

By comparing the moſt exalted ſtate of Rome with its origin, we are naturally led to inquire into the cauſes of its grandeur. From conſidering its fall from ſuch an elevation of power, when the Imperial city was taken by the Goths, we are naturally led to inveſtigate the cauſes of its decline. Theſe inquiries will form the ſubjects of this and the following chapter.

The leading cauſes of the greatneſs of the Roman power may be reſolved,

I. Into the peculiar conſtitution of the government.

[c] B. C. 753. Ferguſon's Roman Republic, c. i.

II. The rigid cultivation of the arts of war.

III. The ſtrong attachment to religion.

IV. The active ſpirit of patriotiſm.

Theſe cauſes operating upon the opinions and determining the conduct of a hardy, active, and courageous people, conſpired to raiſe them to the ſummit of empire.

I. If the Romans had ſubmitted without reluctance to the tyranny of Tarquinius Superbus, and the outrages committed by his family, their ſpirit would have been completely broken, and their city would probably have remained without diſtinction among the ſmall ſtates of Italy. The ſenate ſuffered Tarquin to aſſume the royal authority, without the ceremonies of a legal election, or the uſual approbation of the people. Repeated ſufferings, however, opened their eyes to the horrors of deſpotiſm; they drove the tyrant from his throne, and adopted a conſular form of government. From the moment that Brutus raiſed the dagger, ſtreaming with the blood of Lucretia, and vowed the expulſion of Tarquin, the Romans were deſtined to be the conquerors of the world [d].

[d] B. C. 509. Liv. lib. i. ſect. 59.

We

We need not, therefore, trace the government to a more remote period, than to the abolition of regal power. From that era the real character of the people began to be developed, and a new ſpring was given to their general exertions. They felt the neceſſity of governors, laws, and diſcipline, but of ſuch governors, laws, and diſcipline, as were favourable to the growth of their darling paſſions—the love of freedom, independence, and dominion.

The executive and legiſlative branches of their conſtitution conſiſted of the conſuls, the ſenate, and the aſſembly of the people. The conſuls were at once the prime miniſters of the republic, and the generals of the armies. They preſided over the ſenate, and convened and diſmiſſed it at pleaſure. The ſenate was a deliberative council of ſtate, varying in numbers at different periods of time. This auguſt and venerable body was compoſed of men of fortune, whoſe characters were exemplary, and their extraction noble. To obtain the dignity of a ſenator it was neceſſary to paſs through a regular gradation of important offices. They were the guardians of religion, they appointed the proconſuls to the command of provinces, had the diſpoſal

of

of the public treaſures, and in times of alarm and danger could appoint dictators, and inveſt the conſuls with abſolute power.

To the aſſembly of the Roman citizens belonged the excluſive privilege of making laws, the election of magiſtrates, and the declaration of war or peace. In criminal caſes, they exerciſed the right of pardon, or acquittal. The tribunes of the people were inveſted with very high authority; and although originally intended only to mediate between the Plebeians and Patricians, they could diſannul the decrees of the ſenate by their negative, and, under pretence of meaſures injurious to the ſtate, could arreſt even the conſuls themſelves[e]. As ſome balance to theſe rights of the people, their aſſemblies paid great reſpect to the decrees of the ſenate, and to the ſentiments of perſons illuſtrious for their rank, and reſpectable for the offices they held in the ſtate. Still, however, the branches of the conſtitution ſtood much in need of a common principle of union; and as their privileges were ſo extenſive, and their power was ſo independent, they were frequently involved in contention and diſcord. But the great perſonal liberty enjoyed by every individual,

[e] Liv. lib. iv. ſect. 26, &c.

added to an enthuſiaſtic patriotiſm, frequently united them; and even their conteſts for ſuperiority ſerved ultimately to eſtabliſh a firm and equal balance of power.

The ſpirit of ariſtocracy, infuſed into the government by Servius Tullius[f], was preſerved afterwards in the commonwealth; and this gave riſe to perpetual conteſts between the Patricians and Plebeians. The former, favoured by the ſenate, recommended by dignity of character and illuſtrious birth, for ſome time had ſufficient influence to confine to themſelves the great offices of the ſtate. When the latter, after repeated ſtruggles, had obtained new privileges, the republic enjoyed more internal tranquillity, and her battles were fought with greater ardour; but by the oppreſſion and cruelty which frequently followed, it proved dangerous to inveſt an ignoble and indigent citizen with the ſovereign authority, as was fatally experienced during the bloody proſcriptions of Marius and Sylla. Sometimes many evils reſulted from the prevalence of the popular government, and ſometimes the Plebeians exerciſed their rights with moderation; and when they had acquired the privilege of chooſing the magi-

[f] B. C. 550. Liv. lib. i. c. 42.

ſtrates,

ſtrates, they frequently ſhowed a magnanimous contempt of power. However fierce and bold, and however irritated by oppoſition, they were ſtill ſubmiſſive to the eſtabliſhed laws and public authority. Their diſſenſions gave a keener edge to their temper, and greater activity to their conduct. They encouraged the growth of all thoſe virtues, which were calculated to conciliate the affections of friends, ſtrike terror into enemies, and increaſe the neceſſity of perſonal merit. Thus did they form their hardy youth for the different ſituations of war and peace, as candidates for public offices at home, or competitors for fame abroad.

The cloſe and inſeparable connexion, which ſubſiſted between the civil and military departments, ſufficiently marks the character of the Roman people. In the enrolment of the cenſus, a plebeian was reckoned as a foot ſoldier, a knight as a horſeman, and a legion as a detachment of the whole community. The firſt officers of the ſtate were underſtood to command the armies of the republic by virtue of their civil magiſtracy. No citizen could aſpire to any high offices, before he had performed military ſervice for a certain term of years; and even in the extraordinary commiſſions,

miſſions, which were occaſionally given, civil and military rank were never disjoined. The education of a ſoldier was the firſt ſtep to all the honours of the ſtate; and the ſame perſonal qualities, which were neceſſary for the general, were neceſſary for the prætor or the conſul. However difficult it may appear to blend in due proportions the characters of the ſoldier and the citizen; yet it is evident, that in Rome the union was really effected, and became productive of the boldeſt determinations in the ſenate, and the moſt invincible ſpirit in the field [g].

In the tranſactions of affairs with foreign ſtates, the policy of the Romans was as refined, as their conduct in the field was heroic. That this policy was the reſult of regular and ſyſtematic principles, and did not proceed from accident or particular contingencies, appears from the purſuit of the ſame meaſures in the early, as well as in the advanced ſtate of the republic. Whenever occupied by an important war, the Romans diſſembled injuries received from other ſtates, till a convenient time of retaliation. As they did not always make peace with ſincerity, their treaties were only ſuſpenſions of hoſtilities;

[g] Ferguſon, vol. i. c. 3.

and they took care to introduce into them ſuch conditions as ultimately proved detrimental, and even deſtructive to their enemies[h]. When they had conquered a powerful prince, they inſiſted upon his not making war upon his neighbours, under pretence of their alliance with themſelves; and, by this prohibition, they in effect deprived him of the exerciſe of his military power. Whenever two nations were at war, although not authorized by any alliance to interfere, they always eſpouſed the cauſe of the weakeſt party. They never commenced hoſtilities in a diſtant country, without procuring ſome ally near the enemy, whom they intended to attack. The title of ally, indeed, was no more than a ſplendid and ſpecious name, under which they availed themſelves of the ſtrength and the reſources of other nations. So firm was their adherence to their fundamental maxim, to ſpare the ſubmiſſive, and to humble the proud, that they were not to be moved by any reverſes of fortune, however diſaſtrous, to ſolicit peace. They looked with calmneſs upon the advances even of a victorious enemy; and, after a defeat, diſplayed the ſedate dignity and unſhaken firmneſs of their genuine character. Their conduct to

[h] Monteſquieu, Grandeur des Romains, c. vi.

ſubdued countries ſhowed the refinement of conſummate politicians. They were cautious not to impoſe their laws and cuſtoms upon the nations they had ſubdued, as ſuch conduct muſt unavoidably have produced the moſt formidable confederacies and inſurrections: on the contrary, actuated by a ſpirit of mild and liberal toleration, they left them in the undiſturbed exerciſe of their religion and laws; and only enforced ſuch general principles of ſubordination, as corrected natural ferocity of diſpoſition, inclined them to adopt the arts and cuſtoms of their conquerors, and induced them to regard the Romans, rather as their benefactors, than their maſters [i].

In the vaſt compaſs of their dominions, from the Euphrates to the Atlantic Ocean, and from the Danube to the deſerts of Libya, was felt the influence of their laws. Colonies were planted, cities were built, bar-

[i] Tacitus has informed us of the methods adopted by the politic Agricola, to ſoften the rugged manners of the Britons, and make them patient of the Roman yoke. "Jam vero principum filios liberalibus artibus erudire—inde etiam habitûs noſtri honor, et frequens toga paulatimque diſceſſum ad delinimenta vitiorum, porticus et balnea, et conviviorum elegantiam: idque apud imperitos humanitas vocabatur, cum pars ſervitutis eſſet." Taciti Vita Agric. p. 426. Ed. Græv. The laſt ſentence diſcloſes to us the refined policy of the Romans.

barous

barous tribes were civilized, and the most stupendous public works were raised. The wars, which had desolated neighbouring countries with incessant fury, were terminated by their superior influence; and the Roman provinces, united like the branches of one family, enjoyed a degree of intercourse and peace, to which the world before that auspicious period had been a stranger. Their political conduct, although sometimes versatile, and accommodated to circumstances, was frequently directed by justice, generosity, honour, and moderation; and these virtues, supported by the great extent of their dominion, and the terror of their arms, diffused a blaze of glory round the Roman name, which dazzled the eyes of all nations [k].

The destination of the Romans to war was the first principle of their original institutions; it was cultivated by their kings, and invariably pursued throughout every age of

[k] For the history of the rise and progress of the Roman laws, see Duck de Auctoritate Juris Civilis, Eden's Elements of the Civil Law. For the origin of the laws of the Twelve Tables, and their division into their various parts, see Livy, lib. iii. c. 32, 34. Dionysius Halicarnass. b. x. Hook's Roman History, vol. i. b. ii. c. 27. Livy, lib. vi. c. 41. Gravina, lib. ii. c. 28. Polybius, b. vi.

the commonwealth. It aroſe indeed primarily from the nature of their ſituation. The ſubjects of Romulus were compoſed of a mixed banditti, who made themſelves obnoxious to the neighbouring ſtates by the frequency of their predatory excurſions. As ſuch lawleſs conduct ſubjected them not only to juſt retaliation, but to the ſevereſt infliction of revenge, the wars, which the Romans at firſt began for the ſake of plunder, were ſoon continued upon principles of ſelf-preſervation: they became the objects of fear or of envy to all the ſurrounding people; and king after king, and ſtate after ſtate, came forth to cruſh their aſpiring power. Alba looked with a jealous eye upon the proſperity of her colony, and attempted its overthrow. The Volſci, Sabines, Samnites, Latins, and Etrurians ſucceeded; and the Gauls attacked them with ſuch numerous armies, as often in the early ages of the republic threatened their deſtruction.

The ſhort duration of the conſular government, although liable to ſome inconveniencies, was to men of courage and talents a ſtrong incentive to martial exploits[1]. Various

[1] Livy ſtates particularly the inconveniencies with regard to military operations, which aroſe from the ſhort period of

causes usually operate to set bounds to the ambition of monarchs. In the course of a long reign, many passions, and even indolence itself, successively rule their minds. But as the office of the chief magistrates of the republic was confined to a single year, they were impatient to signalize their short command by great and glorious atchievements. The moment propitious to emulation and a love of glory was not to be lost. They were powerfully stimulated to put a quick period to any war, in which they were engaged, by some rapid and decisive measures; lest the harvest of victory and fame should be reaped by their successors. For the indulgence of this spirit of enterprise, the most extensive scope was afforded, by a long series of campaigns, battles, and sieges; as the temple of Janus was but once shut during the time that Rome was subject to a consular government.

II. This martial spirit, of which such plain vestiges may be traced in the early manners of the people, was matured by the strictest attention to discipline, by every encourage-

of the consular power. I have endeavoured to reconcile that historian with Montesquieu, with whom he is at issue upon this subject. Compare Montesquieu, Grandeur, c. i. with Livy, lib. xli. c. 15, lib. xxiv. c. 8, lib. ix. c. 18.

ment

ment to bear the labours of war, and by the invention and perfection of every expedient which could improve the arts of attack and defence [m].

Their discipline was the result of innumerable dangers, and of painful and long experience. Their attachment to it was equally politic and firm; for they were too acute not to discern that it was the most effectual support of their power. The military oath was administered under peculiar circumstances of solemnity. The legionary soldier swore with alacrity never to desert the golden eagle, which was displayed in the front of his cohort or squadron. To this he looked up as to a tutelary god, under whose wings he fought with confidence, and by whose guidance he was assured he should be led to victory.

In the spacious field of Mars, which was pleasantly situated upon the banks of the Tiber, the ardent youth were exercised in

[m] Polybius, book vi. Gibbon, vol. i. c. 1, and his notes and authorities. Of the Roman discipline, castrametation, arms, marches, and martial law, there is a very curious and distinct account in Josephus de Bell. Jud. lib. iii. c. 5.

 feats

feats of manly activity: here the charioteers contended in the rapid race, and the youthful recruits were trained to hurl the spear, and manage the horse. The veterans here performed their various evolutions in toilsome review. Nothing was wanting to give this busy scene the complete appearance of a field of battle, but the effusion of blood. The soldiers were animated not only by the presence, but the example, of their leaders. Even in the decline of life, Marius continued his accustomed exercises in this place, and here Pompey displayed his unrivalled skill in horsemanship.

When the army, previously trained to every martial exercise, had taken the field, the Roman general found that the surest expedient to efface the dishonour of a defeat, was to increase the labours of the campaign, rather than to diminish the vigour of his troops by any relaxation of duty. Sylla compelled his soldiers, after they had fled before Mithridates, to labour with such incessant assiduity, that they called for another battle, as a respite from their fatigues. Their toil not only inured them to hardships, but preserved their constitution vigorous and healthy, as they

avoided thoſe ſudden changes from extreme exertion to extreme eaſe, which are ſo injurious to modern armies.

Their native courage had every aſſiſtance, which it could in any degree derive from conſtant practice, and habitual ſkill. Their arms were heavier than thoſe of other nations, and their dexterity in uſing them was the reſult of confirmed habit. By the management of all kinds of weapons, and by the practice of every movement, which could give additional ſtrength and activity to the body, they were gradually trained to real action.

During the ſhort intervals of peace, they were engaged in the hardy occupation of agriculture, the only pacific employment which was thought worthy of a Roman citizen. To turn the ſtubborn ſoil, to be expoſed to all the changes of weather, to ſubſiſt upon a frugal diet, and undergo every rural labour, were the beſt preparatives for war. In the early ages of the commonwealth, this employment was ennobled by the practice of conſuls and dictators, who tilled their paternal fields with their own hands; and Cincinnatus, Fabius, and Fabricius were called

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from the plough to fill the greateſt offices of ſtate, and lead their countrymen to battle.

The Romans looked with attention upon the warlike appointments and arms of other nations, and ſhowed their profound judgment in quickly adopting expedients to ſupply their own defects. They copied the form of the Sabine ſhield, and armed their troops with the Spaniſh ſword. Horſes for their cavalry were procured from Numidia; and the wreck of a Carthaginian veſſel, fortunately thrown upon their coaſt, was the model of their firſt ſhip of war. At the beginning of the conteſt with Carthage, they had not a ſingle veſſel of this deſcription; but at its cloſe they were maſters of the ſea. The genius of ſuch a people, ſo verſatile and alive to improvement, ſeemed to form them for extenſive empire; and hence it is the leſs extraordinary, that the ready adoption of foreign arms and inventions proved deſtructive to the nations which originally uſed them[n].

But the peculiar glory of Roman tactics

[n] Monteſquieu, c. i, ii. Kennet, p. 239. Gibbon, vol. i. p. 11. Αγαθοι γαρ, ει και τινες ἑτεροι μεταλαβειν εθη, και ζηλωσαι το βελτιον, Ῥωμαιοι. Polybius, lib. vi. ſect. 20, 21, 24. edit. Gronov.

aroſe

arofe from the formation and difcipline of the legion. Agreeable to the genius of the people, it was better calculated for attack than defence. With refpect to activity, it had great advantages over the Grecian and Macedonian phalanx, which was only fo conftructed, as to force its way by the depth and folidity of its compact and clofely-wedged ranks. The open order, which the legionary troops preferved, gave to every foldier the free exercife of his arms, and afforded fpace for reinforcements to advance to the relief of thofe, whofe ftrength was exhaufted. The fpaces likewife gave room for the firft line to fall back into the fecond, and with them to make a new attack; and if thefe two ranks when united were overpowered, they retired to the rear rank, with whofe affiftance they renewed the charge with threefold impetuofity. The regular manner, in which this advance or retreat was conducted, conftituted the perfection of the Roman difcipline. The fuccefs, which it muft finally fecure, was certain, when we confider the legions oppofed to irregular barbarians, who, if once routed, never returned to a fecond attack. In many battles, the Romans were at firft repulfed by the number or impetuofity of the hoftile troops: but by their judicious arrangements and evolutions, the

 event

event was ultimately favourable; the enemy was checked in the midst of his successful career, and the laurel of victory was suddenly snatched from his hands [o].

The first model of a Roman camp seems to have been suggested by the rude intrenchments, which Romulus caused to be thrown up to defend his rising city. This plan was in succeeding times greatly improved; and the camp of the Romans was remarkable for the perfect regularity of its quadrangular form: it was divided by parallel lines, composing spacious streets, for the accommodation, in separate detachments, of cavalry, infantry, and auxiliaries; was secured by the breadth and

[o] Gibbon, vol. i. c. 1. Ferguson, c. 3. and the cited passages.

Livy contrasts the phalanx with the legion, and points out the superior excellence of the latter, when comparing the forces of Alexander with the Romans—"Statarius uterque miles, ordines servans: sed illa phalanx immobilis et unius generis: Romana acies distinctior, ex pluribus partibus constans: facilis partienti, quacunque opus esset, facilis jungenti." Liv. lib. viii. c. 8. et lib. ix.

"Yet was this *phalanx* never or very seldom able to stand against the Roman armies, which were embattelled in so excellent a forme, as I know not whether any nation besides them have used, either before or since." Sir W. Raleigh, p. 263.

depth

depth of its ditch, and the loftineſs of its ramparts, armed with a line of ſtrong and cloſe paliſades. The proſpect of this admirable arrangement, ſo well calculated for ſecurity and defence, drew from Pyrrhus of Epirus, and Philip the ſecond of Macedon, when at war with the Romans, a candid acknowledgment of its excellence: and when we trace the remaining veſtiges of their encampments, we can in ſome degree realize the deſcriptions which the ancients have given us, and fairly infer the greatneſs of their ſtrength from their long duration. Many camps in this iſland and upon the continent, ſuch as that near Kyneton, upon the borders of Herefordſhire—the camp near Dorcheſter in Dorſetſhire; at Caſter, or Venta Icenorum, near Norwich; Cæſar's camp upon the Rhine, and that which overtops the white cliffs of Dieppe, may be ſuppoſed, from their preſent freſh and unbroken appearance, to have been formed only a few centuries ago.

But it was found, that the perfection of their movements in the field, and the ſecurity of their poſition in camps, would not complete the military art, without impoſing the ſtricteſt reſtraints upon the conduct of a ſoldier, and holding out the moſt lucrative

and

and glorious recompence for his valour. Such was the inflexible rigour of martial law, that cowardice and diſobedience led to inevitable death, inflicted by the ſwords and darts of his comrades; whilſt, on the other hand, every exploit was attended by its appropriate honour. The rich trappings of horſes, the golden chain, the civic, the mural, and the roſtral crowns, awaited the return of the veteran from the field of battle; and penſions ariſing from the ſale of the conquered lands, or ſettlements upon fertile ſpots of ground, were granted for the ſupport of his declining age, and as the rewards of his long and faithful ſervices.

The triumph, which derived its origin from the earlieſt age of the republic, when Romulus returned home laden with ſpoils of his vanquiſhed enemies, tended in a much greater degree to cheriſh this martial ſpirit [p]. This ceremony, in point of ſplendour and pomp, was ſuperior to the honour ever paid to victorious chiefs and armies in any other country. It was attended by an innumerable concourſe of applauding ſpectators, collected from every part of the empire. Such was the glory aſſigned to Paulus Æmilius, the

[p] Liv. lib. i. c. 9. Florus, lib. i. c. 18.

great

great conqueror of Macedon, after he had brought Perſeus, king of that country, and his family priſoners to Rome[q]. The proceſſion was led through ſpacious and lofty arches, ornamented with pictures and ſtatues. At firſt appeared bands of trumpeters and other martial muſicians, who, to prepare the ſpectators for military ſcenes, ſounded the loud and animating charge of battle. The prieſts, clothed in long robes, and crowned with chaplets, walked by the ſide of the white oxen of Clitumnus devoted to ſacrifice. The ſculptured figures, painted banners, and various ſymbols of the ſubdued cities and provinces, were diſtinctly diſplayed. The gold and ſilver coin depoſited in capacious vaſes, were carried upon the ſhoulders of the moſt robuſt ſoldiers. The burniſhed coats of mail, waving creſts, and glittering ſpears, piled in vaſt and promiſcuous heaps, were conveyed in long trains of carriages. The chariot of the captive king next appeared, containing his diadem and his armour. Then walked the royal captive himſelf, with ſlow and melancholy ſtep, attended by his children and friends. The golden crowns, ſent by the numerous ſtates in alliance with the republic, as tokens of congratulation on her recent

[q] B. C. 168. Liv. lib. xlv. c. 39. et 40.

conqueſt,

conqueſt, carried in the hands of their reſpective ambaſſadors, announced the approach of the conqueror himſelf. He appeared ſtanding erect, in a magnificent chariot, that was drawn by four milk-white horſes; he was clothed in a purple robe, his head encircled with a refulgent diadem, and waving in his hand a branch of laurel. The proceſſion was cloſed by the whole army bearing the Imperial eagles at the front of their cohorts and ſquadrons, and intermixing with the ſong of triumph the praiſes of their general.

Thoſe who inſtituted the triumph as a national celebrity, perfectly underſtood the genius of a people diſpoſed to catch the flame of emulation from every incident, which gave dignity to the character of a ſoldier. This honour was indeed rarely granted to any officer of inferior rank to a prætor, conſul, or dictator: but as each of them ſhared it in common with every tribune, centurion, and even legionary of his army, it failed not to inſpire them all with ardour for military ſervice[r]. The ſame glorious diſtinction, there-

[r] The honour of a triumph was refuſed to L. Cornelius Lentulus, becauſe he had borne none of theſe offices: "Res triumpho dignas eſſe cenſebat ſenatus: ſed exemplum a majoribus non accepiſſe, ut qui, neque dictator, neque

conſul

fore, which was the reward of one victory, frequently proved the source of another.

III. Rome at an early period called for the aid of religion, to give greater efficacy to her civil laws and military institutions. Numa lulled the infant kingdom into a short repose, in order to strengthen it by his sacred establishments[s]. The attention paid to augury, which was at once the resource and the delusion of the Romans, arose to the highest degree of superstition. Not only the departed heroes, who had been raised to the rank of divinity by the elegant fictions of Greece, as well as the gods of other nations, were naturalized; but every virtue and vice, every art and profession, the deities of every grove and stream, derived a peculiar character from their respective votaries; were represented by images, ornamented with peculiar

consul, neque prætor res gessisset, triumpharet." Liv. Hist. lib. xxxi. c. 20. But this honour was granted to Pompey, when only a knight. See his Life by Plutarch, vol. ii. p. 299.

Plutarch, a Greek, and Josephus, a Jew, have given circumstantial descriptions of the Roman triumph. It is only from foreigners, or those who write for foreigners, that we can expect particular accounts of manners, customs, and ceremonies, which are familiar to natives.

[s] B. C. 713. Liv. lib. i. c. 19, &c.

symbols,

ſymbols, and worſhipped with appropriate rites. The exceſſive credulity of the populace, ever eager for the account of prodigies and fables, was at all times flattered by the magiſtrates, and reſpected by the philoſophers, who, however they might ſmile in ſecret at the prevailing errors and blindneſs, ſtill aſſumed in public the maſk of external reverence for the mythology of their country. The ceremonies of polytheiſm were in general of the moſt cheerful tendency; proceſſions to the temples, except in caſes of public calamity, were ſocial meetings of feſtivity; and ſacrifices to the gods were little more than the feaſts of their worſhippers.

A ſcrupulous attention to religion was the peculiar boaſt and pride of the Romans: and Cicero heſitates not to aſſert, that to their piety, and their firm belief in the over-ruling providence of the gods, they were indebted for their aſcendancy over all other nations[t]. The eſtabliſhment of pontiffs, flamens, augurs, and veſtals, was ſupported by conſecrated lands; and as the civil and military

[t] "Sed pietate ac religione, atque hac una ſapientia, quod deorum immortalium numine omnia regi gubernarique perſpeximus, omnes gentes nationeſque ſuperavimus." Cicero de Haruſp. Reſponſis.

depart-

departments were not deemed incompatible with the religious, even emperors, conſuls, and generals aſpired to, and exerciſed, the offices of the prieſthood. The union of religion indeed with the civil government is a ſtriking feature in the Roman policy. Auguſtus was ſenſible of its great importance; and he, as well as ſucceeding emperors, ſought to raiſe himſelf above the attacks of his enemies, and exalt the reſpectability of his character to the greateſt elevation, by aſſuming the venerable title and inviolable dignity of the Pontifex Maximus.

IV. The ſpirit of patriotiſm was never ſo generally diffuſed, nor ſo long preſerved, as in ancient Rome. So ardent were the ſentiments which it inſpired, and ſo daring the actions which it excited, that it was rather a paſſion than a habit of the mind. It was the ſource of numberleſs virtues; it foſtered patience, and alleviated toil; it extinguiſhed the fire of ambition, and even ſilenced the voice of nature; and taught the Romans to deſpiſe all private intereſt, and to ſubmit to the ſevereſt pain for the benefit of the ſtate. Hence Brutus condemned his traitorous ſons to an ignominious death. Regulus, unmoved by the ſupplications of his weeping relations and friends,

friends, and undiſmayed by the proſpect of certain torture, returned to Carthage; and the inflexible Manlius, checking the ſtrongeſt feelings of the heart, devoted his victorious ſon to the ſword of the executioner.

The republic was frequently agitated by the moſt violent convulſions of party. The debates of the ſenate were interrupted by the clamorous demands of the tribunes, jealous to ſecure the rights of the people. The Forum was often a ſcene of war, and the peaceful gown was ſtained with blood. The Gracchi, miſled by injudicious zeal for the privileges of the plebeians, fell a ſacrifice to the vengeance of ariſtocratic power: and in a ſubſequent period, the wants of the profligate, and the ambition of the noble, produced a deep and formidable conſpiracy, and hurried the deſperate and crafty Catiline to open rebellion and death.

Still we find that internal diſcord was often ſilenced, when intelligence was brought to the city of hoſtile deſigns and movements. Such an alarm was ſufficient to abate the animoſity of contending factions, and to unite every order in the firmeſt union for the public ſervice. The arrival of Hannibal

in Italy put an immediate ſtop to all civil diſſenſions. The ſtorm, which had raged at home, ſuddenly increaſed its violence, but changed its direction, and fell with redoubled fury upon the common enemy.

From the love of their country immediately reſulted, in the pureſt times of the commonwealth, the ſacrifice of every private intereſt to the public welfare. The Romans foreſaw that opulence, by the introduction of luxury, would diſqualify them for the toils of war, and deſtroy that juſt equality, which limits ambition to the ſole deſire of acting for the general good. They therefore eſteemed poverty a virtue; and this, which in the firſt inhabitants of Rome was the effect of neceſſity, became among their deſcendants, for ſome ages, an object of choice. They conſidered it as the ſure guardian of liberty, and oppoſed it to the encroachments of corruption. A Roman, during the pureſt times of the commonwealth, thought that frugality formed a part of his glory; and at the ſame time that he expoſed his life to every danger, in order to fill the public treaſury, he performed military ſervice without ſtipend or gratuity. Every one thought himſelf ſufficiently opulent in the riches of the ſtate, and

and would have esteemed it unworthy of his character to require any emolument from the offices with which his country had invested him, and which he held only to contribute to her aggrandizement. The generals, animated by the same noble contempt of wealth as the common soldiers, depended only for their subsistence on their small inheritance of land, which they tilled with their own hands. Regulus requested permission of the Senate to return from the command of the army, to the cultivation of his little farm[u]. And Paulus Æmilius, who filled his native city with the rich spoils of the kings of Macedon, died without sufficient money to defray the expences of his funeral.

This virtuous and patriotic disposition may be illustrated by the sumptuary laws, which were enacted at different periods, and which, without any exception in favour of high birth, fortune, or rank, regulated the expences of every citizen. No articles of luxury escaped the attention of these rigid and sagacious legislators, who saw the necessity of establishing public opulence upon private economy. By the Oppian law, the Roman ladies were prohibited from wearing robes of various co-

[u] B. C. 256.

lours,

lours, from having ornaments which exceeded the value of half an ounce of gold, and from being drawn in a chariot by two horſes, unleſs to attend ſome public ſolemnity. Orchius limited the number of gueſts to be invited to entertainments; Fannius regulated the expence of public feſtivals; and Cornelius confined that of funerals to a very moderate ſum. And as a proof that in theſe pure times any relaxation of ſuch laws was highly diſapproved, even by thoſe who were moſt the objects of their ſeverity, Duronius was expelled the Senate, becauſe, when he ſerved the office of tribune, he had abrogated the law which limited the expence of feaſts.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Subject continued.

THE cauſes ſtated in the preceding chapter had the greateſt influence upon the ſentiments and the conduct of the Romans, both at home and abroad, eſtabliſhed their military character, and raiſed them by ſlow degrees to the ſummit of dominion.

Vain were the efforts of the people of Italy to reſiſt them; and the ſucceſſive attacks of the ſovereigns of Macedon, Syria, and Egypt, were equally fruitleſs. The diſgraceful capitulation of the legions in the ſtraights of Caudium, the near approach of Coriolanus to Rome at the head of the Volſci, were productive of no permanent advantage to the conquerors. The armies of the republic were often compelled to fly or to ſurrender, and were ſometimes reduced to the moſt humiliating diſtreſs. But the ſevereſt repulſes tended only to give a new ſpring to their exertions. The impetuous fury of the Gauls, and the alacrity of Pyrrhus, made indeed a temporary impreſſion; but they could not finally

nally prevail. At one time Varro, at another Cneius Scipio was cut off, their forces were routed, and the braveſt of their troops were ſlain; but the courage of the ſenate and the people was ſtill firm and undaunted; the ſpirit of their inſtitutions cheriſhed it, and their exertions were too much the reſult of calm intrepidity, and confirmed habit, to be diſconcerted by the fall of a general, the overthrow of an army, or the ſuſpenſion of a triumph. Victory was ſometimes capricious in the diſtribution of her favours; ſhe flew to give tranſient ſucceſs to other nations, and ſwelled their minds with deluſive hopes of conqueſt. But moſt propitious to diſcipline, valour, and perſeverance, ſhe failed not finally to encircle with her unfading laurel the brows of her darling Romans.

In the Carthaginians we behold their moſt formidable enemies. They were the only people, who, by their opulence, territories, ſpirit, and reſources, ſeemed capable of contending with them for empire, with any proſpect of ſucceſs[a]. Their tranſactions and wars

[a] For an accurate account of the conſtitution, laws, commerce, and dominions of Carthage, ſee Ferguſon's Roman Republic, vol. i. p. 88. Into one chapter of moderate length he has compreſſed the memorable tranſactions of

form one of the moſt intereſting portions of the hiſtory we are now conſidering. But unfortunately for their fame, and the wiſhes of poſterity, the chief accounts recorded of them are received from the writings of their prejudiced rivals. The Roman hiſtorians take delight in placing all their tranſactions in the moſt unfavourable light, and aſperſe their national character with the odious imputation of ſyſtematic cruelty and perfidy. Nor are the Greek writers totally free from the ſame unfavourable bias, and the influence of the

of the ſecond Punic war, p. 106. The account of the battle of Cannæ is detailed with ſingular preciſion and perſpicuity.

Polybius has drawn a conciſe but ſtriking contraſt between the flouriſhing condition of Rome, and the declining ſtate of Carthage, at the commencement of the firſt Punic war. Lib. vi. ſect. 49, &c. See Ariſtot. de Republica, lib. ii. cap. 9. Polybius ſupplied Livy with much information relative to the Punic wars. Livy has not only adopted, in many inſtances, his ſtatement of facts, but even has literally tranſlated his expreſſions. As an acknowledgment for ſuch obligations, he has merely mentioned Polybius in ſuch terms as theſe: "haudquaquam ſpernendus auctor," and, "non incertum auctorem." Liv. lib. xxx. c. 45. and lib. xxxiii. c. 10. I am inclined however to admit the reaſons brought by Drakenborch, tom. iv. p. 506. for ſuppoſing that theſe expreſſions were intended to convey proper ſentiments of reſpect.

ſame

ſame prejudices. The moſt impartial and full detail of their government, laws, arts, manners, and inſtitutions, would have been peculiarly intereſting to Britain, as they roſe to their height of dominion and opulence by the power of their navy, and the extent of their colonies and commerce. During the ſecond Punic war, the full energy of both nations was drawn forth into action [b]. Hannibal combined in his character all the qualifications of a great ſtateſman, and a conſummate general; and when the magnitude and the number of the obſtacles he ſurmounted in his invaſion of Italy be conſidered, the extenſive and difficult track of country which he traverſed, the factious parties of Carthage, which attempted to diſconcert all his meaſures, the diſcordant intereſts of the allied forces which he reconciled, and the powerful armies and ſkilful generals he oppoſed, he may ſurely be ranked among the greateſt heroes of antiquity.

Even after the ſucceſſive defeats of the Romans at Thraſimene, at Trebia, and the complete deſtruction of their choiceſt army at Cannæ, when they were baſely deſerted

[b] B. C. 220.

 by

by many of their allies, the ſenate did not relax, even for a moment, the firmneſs of ancient inſtitutions, and diſdained to negociate with the enemy, while he continued within the territories of the republic. And at that critical conjuncture, far from being diſmayed at his approach, they ſold by public auction the ground upon which his army was encamped; and it was purchaſed at the price it would have reached during a period of the utmoſt tranquillity. At the ſame time that a body of troops advanced from the city to give battle to Hannibal, another detachment marched out at an oppoſite gate to reinforce the army in Spain.

The victorious Hannibal, inſtead of making an additional effort of courage in compliance with the advice of his moſt experienced officers, and marching with rapidity to Rome, immediately after the battle of Cannæ, before his enemies could recover from their conſternation, was imprudent enough to allow his ſoldiers to indulge in the enervating luxuries of Capua. This was the ſubject of his vain lamentation, as he was reluctantly ſailing back to his native country, and beheld for the laſt time the leſſening ſhores

of

of Italy, that had been ſo often the ſcenes of his glory [c]. Such is the intereſting account of Livy. But it ſeems probable that a want of thoſe ſupplies, which he requeſted immediately after the battle of Cannæ, was the true cauſe of the decline of his proſperity, and the ruin of Carthage; as he continued to infeſt Italy for the courſe of fourteen years after his ſtay at Capua, during that time gained ſeveral victories, and kept his enemies in a ſtate of conſtant alarm for the ſafety of the empire.

The ſteady ardour of Scipio Africanus turned the tide of ſucceſs, and the fortune of Hannibal and of Carthage ſunk under his triumphant arms [d]. The battle of Zama gave to the Romans the dominion of the world. The event of the ſecond Punic war was particularly advantageous, by affording them the means of carrying their conqueſts into the moſt diſtant countries: for after the defeat of the Carthaginians, there were no maritime forces ſufficiently powerful to contend with them for the command of the ocean. As their plan of operations was conducted upon regular principles, their ſucceſs was not un-

[c] Liv. lib. xxiii. cap. 18, &c. lib. xxx. cap. 20.

[d] B. C. 202. Liv. lib. xxx. cap. 35.

ſtable

ſtable and tranſitory, like that of Alexander the Great, but continued through the long period of nine centuries to accumulate power, and gradually add kingdom to kingdom.

After Rome had ſubdued the faireſt countries of the ancient world, the arms of her ambitious generals were directed againſt each other. To the bloody proſcriptions of Marius and Sylla ſucceeded the ſtratagems and triumphs of the politic and accompliſhed Cæſar. Fluſhed with the ſlaughter of innumerable Gauls, he paſſed the Rubicon, to plunge his ſword into the boſoms of his countrymen [e]. The ſtern virtue of Cato, and the proweſs of the amiable Pompey, were ineffectually oppoſed to the haughty dictator. At length, the juſt victim of unbounded ambition, pierced by the daggers of his friends, he expired in the ſenate-houſe beneath the ſtatue of his unhappy rival. The debauched and profligate Antony forged new chains for his countrymen; and Brutus and Caſſius, who for a long time oppoſed only mild remonſtrances to his enormities and his uſurpation, at length had recourſe to unavailing arms; and the fields of Philippi were ſtained

[e] B. C. 50. Ferguſon, vol. ii. book iii. chap. 1, &c.

with

with their patriotic blood [f]. The eloquence of Cicero, which had been ſucceſsfully directed againſt the rapacity of Verres, and the conſpiracy of Catiline, was the cauſe of his own lamentable end. With the boldneſs of truth, and the warmth of indiſcretion, he provoked the rage of an implacable tyrant by the enumeration of his private vices. The matchleſs power of his talents, the unſullied integrity of his character, and a long life devoted to the ſervice of his friends and the public, pleaded for him in vain. The vindictive Antony fixed his guiltleſs head upon that roſtrum, from which he had ſo frequently delighted and inſtructed his countrymen [g].

This period of hiſtory, from the time of Marius to the acceſſion of Auguſtus, preſents the moſt calamitous proſpect, filled with recitals of ſanguinary proſcriptions, and crowded with images of martial horror. It abounds with examples of ſucceſsful villainy, and unavailing virtue. But after the naval victory of Actium had given the empire to Auguſtus, the ſcene brightened into the fair views of order and happineſs, the ſtorms of civil diſcord were huſhed into peace, and philoſophy,

[f] Ferguſon, vol. ii. chap. 4.

[g] B. C. 50.

lite-

literature, and the arts derived the greateſt and moſt honourable encouragement from his patronage. To the Tuſcans Rome was firſt indebted for its works of architecture, ſculpture, and painting. The qualities, which particularly characterized the productions of that ingenious people, were boldneſs, ſolidity, and grandeur, as appear from the foundations of the Capitol, the remains of the Cloaca Maxima, and many other ſpecimens which are ſtill extant. But the ſuperior elegance of Grecian execution attracted the whole attention of the Romans, as ſoon as their conqueſts gave them an opportunity of becoming converſant with Grecian works of art.

From the indiſcriminate collection of the ſpecimens of the fine arts aroſe by ſlow degrees the genuine taſte of the Romans. When Marcellus took Syracuſe, he conveyed all the pictures and ſtatues of that elegant city to Rome. The remonſtrances of Fabius Maximus againſt his conduct were uttered without effect; and in vain did he repreſent, that as ſuch trifles were the occupation and the amuſement of an idle and an effeminate people, they were beneath the notice of his countrymen, diſtinguiſhed as they were for the daring energy of their minds, and the

manly

manly roughneſs of their character. The love of the arts, which commenced at this period, was ſucceſsfully gratified by the conqueſt of thoſe Grecian cities moſt eminent as the repoſitaries of their productions. The triumph of Æmilius was graced with ſome of the choiceſt monuments of ſculpture; and Mummius, the taſteleſs conqueror of Achaia, completely ſtripped Corinth of her ſtatues and pictures, to enrich his native city. Sometimes the vanity, and ſometimes the avarice of generals and governors of provinces, contributed to make Rome a magazine of the faireſt ſpoils of Greece; and the cuſtom of adorning the theatres with them by the public authority of the magiſtrates, contributed to diffuſe a refinement of taſte. And even during the bloody conflicts of the civil wars, the public and private repoſitaries were conſiderably enriched; for Sylla brought home the plunder of Athens, and Julius Cæſar formed a valuable collection of ancient gems.

An æra of the higheſt refinement commenced with the reign of Auguſtus[h], whoſe palace was adorned with the rich vaſes of Corinth. Grecian artiſts were invited to Rome, and the maſterly execution of the me-

[h] B. C. 27.

dals of that period prove their ſuperiority to thoſe of former times. The capital of the world, which Auguſtus found diſgraced by buildings of the rudeſt forms and materials, diſplayed under his auſpices and thoſe of his ſon in law Agrippa, in its marble palaces, temples, and theatres, all the elegance and majeſty of Grecian architecture. The public edifices were not only furniſhed with the choiceſt ornaments of the ſame country, but the ſtreets and ſquares exhibited exquiſite images of the gods.

The ſame obligations, which the Romans owed to Greece for inſpiring them with a love of the arts, were extended to philoſophy and polite literature, with this remarkable difference, that in the former they were only admired, in the latter they ventured to contend with their great maſters for the palm of invention. A fondneſs for ſculpture and painting, and the cultivation of eloquence and poetry, kept nearly an equal pace; and the ſame age ſaw them ariſe, and flouriſh together. Writers, whoſe works are the glory of ancient Italy, and the ſubject of encomium for every generation, adorned this golden period, and reached that ſtandard of perfection, from which the unpoliſhed ſtyle of their pre-

deceſſors, and the degenerate affectation of their followers, ſeems equally remote. Horace and Virgil, Tibullus and Propertius flouriſhed in the court of Auguſtus. The two firſt, indeed, through the noble patronage and friendſhip of Mæcenas enjoyed the ſmiles of the Emperor, who was himſelf diſtinguiſhed by the elegance of his compoſitions, and the purity of his taſte. The Lyric as well as the Epic muſe were grateful for his protection and liberality; and Horace and Virgil, indulging the vanity of the Julian family, who claimed a divine origin, have raiſed the betrayer of Cicero, and the colleague of the profligate Antony, to the rank of a deity, and immortalized his fame in their incomparable works.

Auguſtus having always preſented to his mind the image of the murdered Julius, ſtudied to avoid his fate by avoiding his conduct. Practiſed in the deepeſt arts of diſſimulation, he purſued with aſtoniſhing ſucceſs his ambitious career. Yet the equity of his laws and the prudent adminiſtration of his government, during forty years of glory and peace, made no inconſiderable recompence to his country for the evils which he had before inflicted, or countenanced. Rome itſelf roſe

to

to unknown ſplendour; and his munificence, moderation, and paternal care were bounded only by the confines of his vaſt empire. He preſented to the world a moſt extraordinary character, ſince he proved that the ſmiles of fortune, far from increaſing the ſeverity of his temper, and giving a keener edge to his reſentment, could ſoften a timid and ſanguinary tyrant into a mild and generous prince [i].

Perhaps the character, which the judicious hiſtorian of the Roman republic has given of him, may afford the beſt clue to his conduct. "He does not appear to have had from nature, in any high degree, thoſe diſpoſitions to malice or benevolence, which are the great diſtinguiſhing principles of virtue and vice. He ſeems to have been indifferent to mankind, but deſirous of conſideration and power, as objects of intereſt to himſelf. His ruling paſſion was a deſire to reign. In his way to this end, he committed many crimes: but having once effected his purpoſe, he had no other criminal diſpoſition to gratify: or after he was ſovereign, ſtanding in awe of a free ſpirit, which he durſt not inſult, he either from inclination or policy, and probably in

[i] "Reſtitit aliquandiu collegis, ne qua fieret proſcriptio, ſed inceptam utroque acerbius exercuit." Suetonius.

part

part from both, preferred, as it is ſurpriſing every one elſe does not prefer, the proper uſe of his power to the abuſe of it[k]."

But notwithſtanding the external magnificence of Rome, and her proſperity during his reign and that of his immediate ſucceſſors, the manners of the people gradually underwent a great change; the ſtate contained in her boſom the cauſes of her own decay, and the poiſon of diſſolution preyed upon her vitals. She became as abject and degraded, as ſhe had ever been great and powerful. The empreſs of the world ſunk into the moſt humiliating condition; and her downfal may be attributed, I. to the extinction of patriotiſm; II. the introduction of luxury; III. the neglect of the ancient modes of education.

The indiſcriminate admiſſion of all the ſubjects of the empire to the freedom of the city, although a conciliating, was a moſt impolitic meaſure. Inſtead of raiſing the natives of the provinces to the dignity of Romans, this privilege produced the oppoſite effect, and ſunk the latter to a level with the former. It extinguiſhed thoſe high ſentiments of patriotiſm, and that pride of compariſon,

[k] Ferguſon, vol. iii. c. 5, &c.

rifon, upon which the old republicans had valued themfelves, as it deftroyed an exclufive intereft in the profperity of the empire, and degraded the dignity of the Roman character. The right of citizenfhip was rendered of no value, by being fo widely diffufed; and the enthufiafm, which had fired a Brutus, a Cocles, and a Manlius, to fight for the tombs of their fathers, and the altars of their gods, was extinguifhed. The people were no longer actuated by the fame love of independence, or the fame deteftation of fervility. They looked no more with a jealous eye upon the power of the fenate, and the prerogatives of the patricians; and undiftinguifhed in the crowds of new competitors for the fame privileges, they gradually funk into infignificance. The bond of union and fubordination was broken, and the city was torn by innumerable factions of ftrangers, as foon as every province was allowed to form cabals and affociations, and to fhelter its inhabitants under the patronage of fome powerful nobleman[1].

The profufion and extravagance of the rich were difplayed in the celebration of the public games. The combats of gladiators, and the races of charioteers, were exhibited

[1] Montefquieu, cap. ix.

to the diſſolute crowds, who, indulging only the impulſe of a childiſh curioſity, ſpent whole days in the Circus. The licentious productions of the ſtage, often repreſented with all the attractions of ſplendid decorations and crowded proceſſions, vitiated the general taſte, inflamed the paſſions of youth, and encouraged diſſipation and immorality of conduct in perſons of every claſs.

II. From the deſtruction of Carthage may be traced the gradual progreſs of luxury. Profuſion and extravagance began to prevail as ſoon as the precious metals were introduced in abundance. Voluptuouſneſs uſurped the place of temperance, indolence ſucceeded to activity; ſelf-intereſt, ſenſuality, and avarice, totally extinguiſhed that ardour, which in ancient times had glowed in every breaſt for the general good. The ſtreams of wealth, that flowed into Rome at the decline of the commonwealth, were ſuch as almoſt exceed belief[m]. The luxury of the Roman feaſts,

[m] ——————— ſævior armis
Luxuria incubuit, victumque ulciſcitur orbem.
Juven. Sat. vi.

Ferguſon, vol. iii. p. 436. The corruption that prevailed at this time forms the ſtrongeſt contraſt imaginable to the pure times of the republic, when Polybius wrote his hiſtory.

the number of their retinue, and the variety of their places of reſidence, ſometimes kept pace with, and ſometimes even exceeded their great revenues. Apicius, the celebrated epicure, committed ſuicide, becauſe his fortune, inadequate to the enormous demands of his depraved appetite, did not exceed the ſum of eighty thouſand pounds. Seneca mentions ſingle ſuppers, which conſumed the whole eſtate of a Roman knight. No fewer than eighteen elegant villas, ſituated in the moſt delightful parts of Italy, were poſſeſſed by Cicero: and, as if the land was not ſufficient to ſatisfy the caprice of a Roman of faſhion, the lakes and the ſea were occupied by houſes, which extended a conſiderable diſtance from the ſhores. To every nobleman belonged ſuch numerous parties of ſlaves, that they were claſſed according to their nations, and ſtationed in ſeparate diviſions of his palace.

The republic, which had long withſtood the ſhocks of external violence, fell gradually

hiſtory. He contraſts the inflexible honour of the manly Romans with the perfidious character of the effeminate Greeks. Polybius, lib. vi. ſect. 54. See the excellent note of Brotier de Luxu Romanorum. Tacitus, tom. i. p. 402. 4to ed.

a prey

a prey to profperity. Her gallant chiefs had viewed with undaunted eye the approach of Hannibal, and defied the armies of Pyrrhus: but their degenerate defcendants, even the pofterity of Fabius and of Scipio, enriched with the fpoils of Greece, and furfeited with the luxuries of Afia, leaving their battles to be fought by barbarian mercenaries, funk fupine on beds of floth, and heard the trumpet of battle with difmay.

Such indeed was the rapid change of manners, that the genius and character of the people appear to have undergone a total alteration in the fpace of a century, and a general depravity was vifible in all orders of the ftate. The confuls, after having obtained their elevated rank by intrigues and bribery, undertook their campaigns either to enrich themfelves with the fpoils of conquered nations, or to plunder the provinces of the allies under the mafk of protectors and defenders. From fuch impure fources were derived the immenfe treafures of Craffus, Lucullus, and Cæfar. And as the means of corruption increafed, fo likewife in equal proportion did the difpofition to be corrupted. The populace of the empire were tempted to the city by the diftribution of corn, and the

 frequency

frequency of public games; enervated by idleneſs, they were ready to follow every ambitious candidate, who was rich enough to purchaſe their votes. The laws were ſilent in the midſt of theſe abuſes, or they were liſtened to without reſpect or obedience. The magiſtrates beheld with approbation, or with indifference, the diſorders of the people. The adminiſtration of government under the emperors, influenced by the caprice of their tempers, was ſometimes rigid, and ſometimes relaxed: the tide of degeneracy flowed with the greateſt rapidity, and ſwept away all ranks in its current.

III. To add to this train of deſtructive evils, the mode of education underwent a complete change, and prepared the minds of the noble youth for dependance and ſervility. Cornelia had, in the purer ages of the commonwealth, brought up the Gracchi, and Julius and Auguſtus Cæſar were reared by Aurelia and Attica; their minds were formed upon principles of honour and virtue, and were directed to the moſt glorious purſuits; and they were taught by their illuſtrious mothers to imbibe the ſpirit, and emulate the exploits of their anceſtors. In ſucceeding times, the youths were entruſted to ignorant domeſtics,

domeſtics, who initiated them into the various arts of luxury and extravagance. Tutors and rhetoricians, who diſgraced the name of Greeks, repaired to Rome, and by their inſinuating manners, verſatile diſpoſitions, and frivolous attainments, gained a complete aſcendancy in the nobleſt families. A fondneſs was formed in early life for expenſive diverſions, and trifling acquirements; and no time was given to the cultivation of the liberal arts, or the ſtudy of Roman or Grecian hiſtory.

Nor was the mode of thinking leſs vitiated in early years by the progreſs of a ſpecious and deſtructive philoſophy. The principles of Epicurus had been for ſome time faſhionable in Rome; and his diſciples advancing far beyond the modeſt ſcepticiſm of the Academic ſchool, boldly denied the providence of a ſupreme Ruler of the univerſe, and openly maintained, that death was the extinction of all exiſtence. Theſe tenets gave a fatal blow to the eſtabliſhed religion, and were calculated to undermine the great ſanctions of moral obligation. The noble youths, who reſorted to Athens, and other ſeats of learning, were thus taught to deſpiſe the ceremonies, and deride the maxims of their na-

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tional belief, a firm adherence to which had been the glory of their anceſtors, and had not only operated powerfully upon their martial efforts, but was cloſely connected with the civil conſtitution of the republic. This philoſophy had the recommendation of great and attracting examples to make it popular; for it was adorned with the poetical graces of Lucretius, and honoured by the commendation of Virgil; it was favoured by the ſcepticiſm of Cicero, and was embraced by the ſagacious Cæſar, and the learned and accompliſhed Atticus [n].

The various cauſes of her decline prepared Rome for her moſt abandoned emperors. The tame ſervility of the ſenate, and the turbulent ſpirit of the prætorian bands, ſometimes raiſed to the imperial purple the mean-

[n] In a train of beautiful allegory Sir W. Raleigh thus ſums up the preceding and ſubſequent parts of this hiſtory. "We have left the empire of Rome, the laſt of the four great monarchies of the world, flouriſhing in the middle of the field, having rooted up, or cut down, all that kept it from the eyes and admiration of the world. But after ſome continuance, it ſhall begin to loſe the beauty it had; the ſtorms of ambition ſhall beat her great boughs and branches one againſt another, her leaves ſhall fall off, her limbs wither, and a rabble of barbarous nations enter the field, and cut her down." Hiſtory of the World, p. 668.

eſt and moſt undeſerving of the ſoldiers. Yet the corruption of principles was not ſo general, as not to make a Nero, a Tiberius, a Caligula ſurveyed with horror and deteſtation by their contemporaries, as well as by poſterity. They were alike infamous for a profuſion, which was unbounded; for a ſenſuality, which was a diſgrace to nature; and for a vindictive rage, which was the avowed foe to liberty and virtue. From the pictures of their depravity and wanton cruelty we retire with diſguſt, and relieve our minds by contemplating the pure characters and glorious conduct of Titus, Nerva, Trajan the Antonini, and Aurelius [o]. Such illuſtrious perſons afforded ſome ſupport to the declining ſtate, but were not capable of giving permanency to their own wiſe and prudent inſtitutions; ſince thoſe who followed, as well as thoſe who preceded them, were equally diſtinguiſhed by a want of political talents, and for the moſt flagrant abuſe of power. The faint and tranſient beams of ſunſhine ſerved only to deepen the gloom which overſpread a ſtormy atmoſphere. Their juſtice and humanity ſuſpended that downfal of the empire, which they could not prevent; the native vigour and independence of the people

[o] A. C. 80—160.

were fled, and the virtues of a few illuſtrious individuals were unable to recal them.

As the proſperity of Rome had been attended with the flouriſhing ſtate of the arts, literature, and ſcience, they gradually declined with her; and the ſame change, which was viſible in the extinction of liberty and martial ſpirit, appeared equally in its effects on the intellectual powers: ignorance was the companion of corruption and ſervility.

The hardy barbarians of the north of Europe and Aſia at length poured forth vaſt armies, to ravage every country more cultivated than their own, and to poſſeſs themſelves of the ſeat of government. They were drawn from their remote foreſts and cold abodes, either by a ſpirit of reſtleſs activity, and the ſenſe of injury; or they were lured by the report of the luxuries of Italy, and the delicious fruits, which abounded in that mild and genial climate. The Goths, the Vandals, and the Huns, ruſhed forth like the mighty waters of an impetuous torrent, and ſwept away every obſtruction [p]. Their march was marked by blood and fire, by deſtruction to the arts, and implacable hoſtility to civilized

[p] Robertſon, Charles V. vol. i. p. 6. 10, &c.

man. For nearly two centuries they continued the moſt deſolating ravages; and the hiſtorians of that wretched period are at a loſs for deſcription ſufficiently ſtrong, or images ſufficiently horrid, to repreſent its diſtreſs and calamity.

The condition, in which the politic and warlike Alaric found the imperial city, ſufficiently manifeſted the degeneracy of its inhabitants [q]. It had long been the reſort of all nations, and the receptacle of thoſe, whoſe follies and vices proved the different countries of their birth. To the incapacity of a weak government, the general of the Goths oppoſed intrepidity and military ſkill. His army indeed reflected the image of the ancient Romans at that momentous period of their hiſtory, when the fruitleſs attempt of Hannibal to conquer his enemies ſerved only to draw forth the full energy of their character. A fierce, a hardy, and well-diſciplined army, had to contend, if conteſt it might be called, with a vain, luxurious, and puſillanimous race of nobles, and a populace, vile, indigent, and wretched. The conqueror found the city unprepared for his attacks; he entered it amid the ſilence of the night, and directed

[q] A. C. 410.

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his march by the conflagration of palaces. The ſlaughter was dreadful, the ſpoils immenſe, and the holy faith of Chriſt alone checked the avarice and luſt of the plunderers. To complete the degradation of the imperial city, the ſons and daughters of conſuls and patricians attended at the feſtive board, and were doomed to drag the chains of the haughty Goths, who diſplayed their triumphant banner waving over the proſtrate eagle of Rome.

The riſe, aggrandizement, decline, and fall of the Roman power, are included within the compaſs of twelve centuries [r]. The mighty empire, like the majeſtic temples that adorned her capital, was broken into fragments, and divided among numerous nations. At the end of that period, by the incurſions of foreign armies, the firſt foundations of thoſe kingdoms were laid, which are now the moſt diſtinguiſhed in the hiſtory of the weſtern world. The Saxons contended ſucceſsfully with the natives for the poſſeſſion of Britain. Gaul and Spain were divided between the Franks, Viſigoths, Suevi, and

[r] Rome was founded B. C. 753. Taken by Alaric A. C. 410. Duration of the Empire 1163. Gibbon, vol. iii. p. 235, &c.

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Burgundians; Africa was exposed to the Vandals and Moors; and Italy was filled by an army of barbarians [s]. Constantinople, which continued for some centuries after the reign of its celebrated founder to give an imperfect representation of imperial splendour, was finally taken by the Turks with its dependent territories. The Roman empire resembled the Danube, which, after pouring a grand and impetuous flood, and receiving the supply of large rivers, is divided into various streams, before it mixes with the ocean.

The Romans, illustrious as they were for the dignity of their character, their martial prowess, and the extent of their empire, hold forth a splendid light for the guidance of mankind. Their virtues in the prosperity of the commonwealth, and their vices in its decline, furnish examples and cautions to persons of all succeeding times. In those kings and emperors, who were remarkable for pu-

[s] For a general view of Europe at the dissolution of the Roman empire, see the Preface to Mallet's Northern Antiquities; Warton's first Dissertation on English Poetry; Robertson's History of Charles V. vol. i. chap. i. Machiavel's History of Florence, book i. and Dalrymple's Essay on Feudal Property.

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rity of character, monarchs may find examples worthy of their imitation; and commonwealths may be taught, from the disorders of their factions, what limits to prescribe to the ambition of the wealthy, and what curb to impose upon the licentiousness of the populace. To be perfectly conversant with this important history, is to view mankind engaged in the fullest exercise of patriotism, courage, and talents;—or to contemplate them enervated by luxury, debased by corruption, and sunk into the most abject disgrace.

In what manner the Romans declined from their greatest excellence of character, and how in their degeneracy of manners they involved the decay of genius, our imperfect sketch of their history has shown. Let the natives of Britain, perusing the instructive lessons here presented to them, drop the tear of compassion upon the weakness of human nature; and let them at the same time collect, from such edifying examples, new incitements to energy and perseverance in every public and private virtue.

CHAPTER IX.

The Hiſtory of Modern Europe.

AS government and laws are rendered more conducive to general happineſs in modern, than they ever were in ancient times; as the manners of ſociety have experienced a very great improvement in proportion to the wide diffuſion of knowledge, and the facility of communication; as navigation has enlarged the intercourſe of mankind by the diſcovery of a new world; and as, moreover, the light of reformed Chriſtianity has diſpelled much of the darkneſs of ſuperſtition in ſome nations, and beamed with ſplendour upon others; it muſt ſurely be a ſubject of pleaſing inquiry, to inveſtigate the leading cauſes, which have produced ſuch extraordinary, ſuch extenſive, and ſuch beneficial effects.

And when we examine more cloſely the nature of theſe effects, and conſider, that they have an immediate reference to our own ſituations in the world;—that they relate to the arts which now adorn, and the cuſtoms which now regulate, ſociety;—to the inſti-

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tutions, which direct our conduct, model our manners, and influence our opinions, in all religious, as well as civil affairs; the ſubject will riſe to a much higher degree of importance;—we ſhall feel our intereſt more ſtrongly involved in it; we ſhall proſecute our reſearches with a degree of ardour proportioned to its importance, and ſhall ſet its juſt value upon the hiſtory of modern Europe.

The moſt ſtriking objects, which this hiſtory preſents to us, are,

I. The eſtabliſhment and abolition of the Feudal Syſtem. II. The hiſtory of the Cruſades. III. The inſtitution of Chivalry. IV. The Reformation. V. The revival of Claſſical Learning.

To trace the hiſtorical outlines of thoſe inſtitutions, inventions, and diſcoveries, which diſcriminate the hiſtory of modern from that of ancient Europe, is our preſent deſign. To thoſe eminent writers, who have diſcuſſed the reſpective ſubjects at large, we muſt refer for more complete information.

I. *The Feudal Syſtem.*

The inhabitants of the north of Europe and

and Aſia, who iſſued in great multitudes from their native foreſts, during the fourth and fifth centuries of the Chriſtian æra, and who overturned the Roman empire, introduced a new ſpecies of government into the conquered countries, which is known by the name of the Feudal Syſtem. It is very remarkable, that although the Barbarians, who framed it, ſettled in their newly-acquired territories at various times, were commanded by different leaders, and ſpoke different languages; yet the ſyſtem was eſtabliſhed with little variation in every country in Europe. This great uniformity is peculiarly ſtriking, and has furniſhed ſome writers with an argument, that all theſe people ſprung originally from the ſame ſtock. But the fact may perhaps with more probability be attributed to the ſimilar ſtate of their manners, and the ſimilar ſituation in which they all found themſelves, on taking poſſeſſion of their new domains.

The plan of the feudal conſtitution was this:—Every freeman, or ſoldier, for the terms were at that period ſynonymous, upon receiving an allotment of conquered lands, bound himſelf to appear in arms againſt the common enemy, whenever he ſhould be called

called upon by his commander. This military ſervice was the condition upon which every one received, and the tenure by which he continued to poſſeſs, his lands; and this obligation was eſteemed both eaſy and honourable. The ſame ſervice, which a ſoldier owed to his officer, was due from an officer to his king. The king obliged thoſe, among whom he diſtributed the conquered lands, to repair to his ſtandard, with a number of followers, in proportion to the extent of their reſpective eſtates, and to aſſiſt him in all his expeditions. Thus a feudal kingdom conveys rather the idea of a military than a civil eſtabliſhment. The victorious army, taking their poſts in different diſtricts of a country, continued to be arranged under its proper officers, and to be ſubject to martial laws [a].

The principle of policy, upon which this ſingular eſtabliſhment was founded, was ſelf-

[a] See Henry's Hiſtory of England, vol. i. p. 30. Spelman's Concilia, vol. i. p. 101. Wilſon's Concilia, p. 171. Du Cange's Gloſſary, Article *Allodium*. Robertſon's Charles V. vol. i. notes; and Dalrymple's Eſſay on Feudal Property, book i. chap. 2. The ſketch, which Tacitus has given of the civil inſtitutions and polity of the Germans, contains the outlines of the feudal eſtabliſhment. De Moribus Germanorum, c. xi, xii, xiii.

defence.

defence. The new ſettlers in a country wiſhed to protect themſelves, not only againſt the attacks of the inhabitants, whom they had expelled from their poſſeſſions, but againſt the more formidable inroads of freſh invaders. But, unfortunately for the happineſs of mankind, and the tranquillity of ſociety, it was replete with many evils. The powerful vaſſals of the crown ſoon acquired that land as unalienable property, which was originally a grant during pleaſure, and appropriated to themſelves titles of honour, as well as places of truſt. In proceſs of time they obtained the power of ſovereign juriſdiction, both civil and criminal, within their own domains; they exerciſed the privilege of coining money, and carried on wars againſt their private enemies. Barons poſſeſſed of ſuch enormous power diſdained to conſider themſelves as ſubjects; and the conſequence was, that a kingdom was broken into as many ſeparate principalities, as it contained powerful nobles. Innumerable cauſes of jealouſy and diſcord ſubſiſted between them, and gave riſe to conſtant wars. Every country in Europe, either waſted or kept in continual alarm during theſe feuds, was filled with caſtles and places of ſtrength, erected for the ſecurity of the deſpotic chieftain, not againſt foreign inva-

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ſion, but domeſtic hoſtilities. In the reign of Stephen of England, when the feudal ſyſtem was in its height, not leſs than a thouſand caſtles, with their dependent territories, are ſaid to have covered the ſouthern part of this iſland. Among fierce and haughty chieftains, the laws enacted by princes and magiſtrates commanded no degree of reſpect; and the right of retaliation and revenge was conſidered as an inherent privilege of their order. The eſtate of every baron was an independent territory; his caſtle was a ſtrong and well-garriſoned fortreſs, and he always conſidered himſelf as living in a ſtate of war. When provoked by injury, he met his adverſary at the head of his vaſſals in hoſtile array, and truſted to his ſword for the deciſion of the conteſt. Every man was the avenger of his own wrongs, and ſought the redreſs of his grievances in ſingle combat, the regulation and ceremonies of which were formed into a ſyſtem of juriſprudence. The common people, the moſt uſeful as well as the moſt numerous part of the community, were reduced to the miſeries of ſlavery. The peaſant was conſidered as the mere produce of the ſoil, and was transferred from one lord to another, with the utenſils and cattle of his farm. The king, ſtripped of almoſt every preroga-

tive, and poſſeſſing little more than the empty title of ſovereign, had neither power to protect the innocent, nor to puniſh the guilty. A general anarchy, deſtructive of all the comforts which men expect to derive from a ſtate of ſociety, prevailed. To complete and confirm theſe evils, the progreſs of time gradually fixed and rendered venerable an eſtabliſhment, which originated in violence, and was continued with every ſpecies of deſpotiſm and injuſtice—a ſyſtem which was as hoſtile to the intellectual as to the moral improvement of the mind; which baniſhed ſcience and the arts, ſunk mankind in groſs ignorance, obſcured the ſacred light of Chriſtianity in the thickeſt darkneſs of ſuperſtition, and was favourable only to the growth of thoſe ſtern virtues, which are characteriſtic of uncivilized nations. The rigour of tyranny hardened the minds of the nobles, the yoke of vaſſalage debaſed the ſpirit of the people, the generous ſentiments inſpired by a ſenſe of equality were extinguiſhed, and there was no check to ferocity and violence. Accordingly a greater number of thoſe atrocious actions, which fill the mind with aſtoniſhment and horror, occur in the hiſtory of the feudal times, than in that of any period of the ſame extent in the annals of Europe.

Such was the deplorable ſtate of ſociety from the ſeventh to the eleventh century. From that æra may be dated the return of government, laws, and manners in a contrary direction. We ſhall hereafter notice the favourable effects of the Cruſades upon the feudal ſyſtem. In ſucceeding times a variety of cauſes began to operate, which checked the licentiouſneſs of the barons, ſoftened the ferocity of their manners, and finally put a period to their domination. The eſtabliſhment of ſtanding armies in the fifteenth century gave more effectual authority to kings; and from that time they no longer regarded their nobles as their equals, or found it neceſſary to have recourſe to timid counſels, or feeble efforts, to control their power. They began not only to wield the ſceptre, but to brandiſh the ſword; and either checked the deſigns of their barons by intimidation, or puniſhed their rebellion by force.

Charles the ſeventh of France, urged by his deſire of expelling the Engliſh from France in the year 1445, was the firſt who adopted this meaſure; but as it was ſo repugnant to the genius of the feudal ſyſtem, and required the greateſt boldneſs to carry it into execution, he retained a large body of forces in his ſervice, and appointed funds for their regular

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payment. The principal nobility ſoon reſorted to his ſtandard, and looked up to him as the judge, and the rewarder of merit. The feudal militia, compoſed of men of rank and military tenants, who were only occaſionally called out, were in time regarded with contempt, by ſoldiers accuſtomed to the operations of regular ſervice. This example of breaking the independent power of the barons was followed by the politic Henry VII. of England. He undermined that edifice, which it was not prudent to attack with open force. By judicious laws he permitted his nobles to break the entail of their eſtates, and to expoſe them to ſale. He prohibited them from keeping numerous bands of retainers, which had rendered them formidable to his predeceſſors. By encouraging agriculture and commerce, and all the arts of peace during a long reign, and by enforcing a vigorous and impartial execution of the laws, he not only removed many immediate evils reſulting from the feudal ſyſtem, but provided againſt their future return. The influence of his ſalutary plans was gradually felt, and they contributed more and more in proceſs of time to the good order, proſperity, and general welfare of his ſubjects.

 II. *The*

II. *The Crusades.*

Few expeditions are more extraordinary than thoſe which were undertaken by the cruſaders, for the recovery of the Holy Land out of the power of the Turks. If we conſider the great numbers of Europeans, who were engaged in them, or their long and obſtinate perſeverance in the ſame deſign, notwithſtanding an almoſt uninterrupted ſeries of hardſhips, loſſes, and defeats; and if we reflect upon the important conſequences, with which theſe events were attended, both to themſelves and their deſcendants; the hiſtory of the cruſades, including a period of one hundred and ſeventy-five years, will be found to merit very particular regard, and to follow in proper order our ſurvey of the feudal ſyſtem.

From the æra of the cruſades may be traced the diffuſion of ſeveral kinds of knowledge, and the various improvements of ſociety in manners, commerce, and arts. And from the communication of the weſtern with the eaſtern nations, aroſe a ſucceſſion of cauſes, which with different degrees of influence, and with more or leſs rapidity, contributed

to aboliſh anarchy and confuſion, and to introduce order and improvement into ſociety.

Judea, or the Holy Land, was the higheſt object of veneration to the Chriſtians of the middle ages. There had lived the Son of God; there he had performed the moſt aſtoniſhing miracles; and there he had ſuffered death for the ſins of the world. His holy ſepulchre was preſerved at Jeruſalem; and as a degree of veneration was annexed to this conſecrated place, nearly approaching to idolatry, a viſit to it was regarded as the moſt meritorious ſervice, which could be paid to heaven; and it was eagerly frequented by crowds of pilgrims from every part of Europe. If it be natural to the human mind to ſurvey thoſe ſpots, which have been the abodes of illuſtrious perſons, or the ſcenes of great tranſactions, with delight and veneration, what muſt have been the ardour with which the Chriſtians of thoſe times, the ruling paſſion of whoſe mind was religious enthuſiaſm, regarded a country, which the Almighty had ſelected as the reſidence of his choſen people, and the place where his Son had ſhed his precious blood, to expiate the ſins and accompliſh the redemption of mankind? The zealous travellers to Paleſtine

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were long expoſed to the inſults, extortions, and cruelty of the ferocious and hoſtile Infidels: but at length their complaints rouſed the Europeans to attempt their expulſion. Peter, ſurnamed the Hermit, a native of Amiens in Picardy, was the firſt mover of this great project [b]. Armed with the authority of Pope Urban II. he traverſed the countries of Europe, and with rude but pathetic eloquence deſcribed the injuries he had received in his pilgrimage to the holy ſepulchre. He quickly kindled the ardour of perſons of all ranks. The firſt converts to this active miſſionary became the warmeſt advocates for the expedition. Great numbers, chiefly conſiſting of peaſants, ill-provided with neceſſaries, and whoſe ignorance magnified the hopes and diminiſhed the dangers of the undertaking, periſhed in the foreſts of Hungary, or the plains of Aſia. A pyramid of bones, erected by Solyman, the emperor of the Turks, near the city of Nice, informed their followers of the place of their defeat. Of the firſt cruſaders three hundred thouſand

[b] A. D. 1095 to 1099. Gibbon, vol. vi. cap. 58, &c. Robertſon's Charles V. vol. i. p. 292, &c. Hiſtory of Modern Europe, vol. i. letter 24, &c. Introduction to the Literary Hiſtory of the fourteenth and fifteenth Centuries. Rapin, vol. i. p. 244, &c.

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are ſaid to have fallen a ſacrifice to their fanaticiſm, before a ſingle city was reſcued from the Infidels. More ſtrongly ſtimulated, rather than deterred by this cataſtrophe, Baldwin, earl of Flanders; Godfrey of Bouillon; Hugh, count of Vermandois, brother to the King of France; Raymond, count of Thoulouſe; Robert, duke of Normandy, the eldeſt ſon of William the Conqueror; Bohemond and Tancred, who were likewiſe princes of the Norman race, ſet forth upon this enterpriſe: all were chiefs of high renown, famed for their proweſs in arms, and ſtimulated by the ſame intrepid and fanatical ſpirit. They were followed by their numerous adherents and vaſſals, whoſe ſervices were either prompted by zeal and attachment to their reſpective lords, or purchaſed with rewards and promiſes [c].

[c] "The cruſaders wore a croſs moſt commonly on their ſhoulders in gold, or ſilk, or cloth, ſewed on their garments. In the firſt cruſade, all were red; in the third, the French alone preſerved that colour, while green croſſes were adopted by the Flemings, and white by the Engliſh." Gibbon, vol. vi. p. 8. "The croſs was inſcribed by ſome zealots on their ſkin; an hot iron, or indelible liquor, was applied to perpetuate the mark." Idem, p. 17.

"Armorial bearings were invented to reward merit and diſtinguiſh families; and the ſcience of heraldry may be traced

Constantinople was at that time the largest as well as the most beautiful city in Europe. It alone retained the image of ancient elegance, in manners and in arts. It was the place where manufactures of the most curious fabric were wrought. It was the mart of Europe for all the commodities of the East, and the seat of empire, elegance, and magnificence. Such was the place appointed as a general rendezvous for all the crusaders. Several contemporary writers were witnesses to this singular assembly of different nations; and they give a lively picture of the characters and manners of each people. When the polite natives of the metropolis of the East speak of the northern warriors, they describe them as barbarous, illiterate, fierce, and savage; and they sometimes inveigh against them with great violence, and relate instances of their ferocity and devastation in terms not unlike those, which preceding historians had employed in describing the incursions of the Goths and Vandals, when they overturned the Roman empire. But on the other hand the crusaders, while they despised the effeminate manners and unwarlike character of the Greeks, were surprised

traced back to Palestine." Introd. to the Hist. of the fourteenth and fifteenth Centuries.

at the wealth and magnificence of their metropolis.

After ſuffering various hardſhips and loſſes, the cruſaders at length reached the walls of Jeruſalem. Forty days were employed in the ſiege of the holy city; at the expiration of which, they took it by aſſault; and forgetful of the leſſons of mercy taught by their great maſter, whoſe enſign they bore, they indulged in the rage of promiſcuous ſlaughter, and put all Jews and Turks, of every age and of either ſex, to the ſword. The events, which happened during this romantic expedition, and the heroic exploits performed by the champions of the Croſs, and their Mahometan foes, furniſhed the ſubject of the celebrated Poem of Taſſo, the moſt pleaſing memorial, which is left to us of this enterpriſe. Godfrey of Bouillon, the moſt worthy of the heroes of Chriſtendom, was proclaimed King of Jeruſalem. In imitation of his Saviour he was crowned with thorns; he rejected the appendages of royalty, and contented himſelf with the modeſt title of Defender, and Baron of the holy ſepulchre [d]. His companions, with the exception only of the gallant Tancred and his adherents, returned to Europe:

[d] A. D. 1099.

after

after whoſe departure the Turks inſulted the garriſon of Jeruſalem; and the ſhort reign of Godfrey, which continued only for one year, did not give him time to ſecure the ſtability of his new kingdom. In vain did the knights of the hoſpital of St. John, and of the temple of Solomon, who in their aſſociations blended the diſcipline of a monaſtic with the hardſhips of a military life, endeavour to ſupport the tottering throne of Baldwin, his ſucceſſor. Surrounded by the exaſperated and reſtleſs Mahometans, he was compelled to ſolicit a reinforcement from the kingdoms of Europe for the ſupport of his declining power.

The fruits reaped in this firſt cruſade ill repaid its great loſs and expence, and were compriſed within the little territory of Jeruſalem, the dominion of which was bounded by the term of fourſcore years. The holy war, however, continued to be recommended in the letters of the Pope, and the ſermons of the Clergy, with unabated ardour and zeal. It was ſtill repreſented to the people as the cauſe of God and of Chriſt, in which death would confer the merit of matyrdom, and paradiſe would be equally the reward of defeat, or of victory.

St. Bernard, famed for his eloquence and enthusiastic piety, and the great influence, which he obtained amongst the people, flourished at the beginning of the twelfth century. Armed with the authority of Pope Eugene III. he rekindled the expiring flame of military fanaticism. With a voice, that was in every place obeyed without delay, he called the nations to the protection of the holy sepulchre. The fame of his pretended miracles and predictions removed every doubt of success from the minds of his credulous hearers; insomuch, that all who were able to bear arms were eager to participate the glory of the pious warfare. Bernard was invited to become a leader in the expedition, which he so zealously recommended; but he prudently declined an appointment, which would eventually have exposed him to the ridicule, and probably to the resentment, of his followers. He was more fortunate in advancing the interests of the Church, than in the success of his projects, or the fulfilment of his predictions. The court of Rome profited by his labours, and canonized his memory. Conrad III. emperor of Germany, and Louis VII. king of France, were the principal agents in the second crusade[e]. From

[e] A. D. 1147.

the

the hands of Bernard they received the croſs, with aſſurances, that he had authority from heaven to promiſe them victory. Their cavalry was compoſed of one hundred and forty thouſand knights, and their immediate attendants; and if even the light-armed troops, the women and children, the prieſts and monks be excluded from the computation of their effective forces, their number will ariſe to four hundred thouſand ſouls. The fatal errors of their predeceſſors ſuggeſted the ſafer expedient of a voyage, in preference to a march into Paleſtine; and the ſea-ports of Genoa, Piſa, and Venice, were from this time frequented by the cruſaders for that purpoſe. In the Italian ſtates they found more cultivated manners, and greater knowledge, than their own countries could boaſt; ſo that in them, as well as in the metropolis of the Eaſt, the moſt ſtriking examples of civilization and refinement were furniſhed to theſe rude adventurers.

The event of this enterpriſe proved ſtill more diſaſtrous to the cauſe of the cruſaders than their firſt expedition. Manuel, the emperor of the Greeks, is accuſed by his own ſubjects of giving intelligence of their plans to the Turkiſh Sultan, and of providing them

with

with treacherous guides. The conduct of the Chriſtian leaders was dictated by no ſound policy, or vigorous co-operation. Inſtead of cruſhing the common foe by a preconcerted attack at the ſame time on different ſides of his territories, Louis of France had ſcarcely paſſed the Boſphorus, when he was met by the returning Emperor, who had loſt the greateſt part of his army in a battle on the banks of the Meander. The king of France advanced through the ſame country to a ſimilar fate; and was glad to ſhelter the relics of his army in the ſea-port of Satalia. At Jeruſalem theſe unfortunate monarchs met to lament their ſad reverſes of fortune. Their martial trains, the ſlender remnants of mighty armies, were joined to the Chriſtian powers of Syria; and a fruitleſs ſiege of Damaſcus was the final effort of the ſecond cruſade.

The third, undertaken by Frederic Barbaroſſa, emperor of Germany, and the kings of England and France, was moſt remarkable for the victories of Saladin, the temperate, brave, and generous chief of the Saracens. His pretenſions to commendation and renown were much better founded than thoſe of Philip of France, and Richard Cœur de Lion. His life exhibited a ſeries of actions, which his

his rivals in arms would have done well to have imitated, and which, far from disgracing, would have reflected honour upon the profession of a Christian. He appears not to have been deficient either in literature or science; and, in the progress of his conquests, he respected the arts. When he retook Jerusalem, he treated his captives not only with clemency, but even with kindness. We must not however deprive Richard of England of his due praise for military prowess, as he displayed, upon all occasions of danger and enterprise, the most heroic courage. He took the city of Acre, a place, which has in our own times been the scene of the undaunted valour and steady perseverance of the natives of Britain; and among other spoils, esteemed of inestimable value in an age of gross superstition, he recovered some of the wood, which was said to belong to the cross of Christ. The bravery of Richard continued for many years to be proverbial in the East; his terrific name was used by the Syrian mother to silence the refractory child, and by the rider to check the starting horse. The perfidious conduct of Philip of France, in taking advantage of the absence of Richard to invade his territories in Normandy, in direct violation of his solemn oath,

oath, obliged him to conclude a truce with Saladin, who was allowed to retain poſſeſſion of Jeruſalem, on condition, that the holy ſepulchre ſhould be open to the viſits of Chriſtian pilgrims without moleſtation or tribute. When the treaty was concluded, the Engliſh monarch informed Saladin, that he might depend upon his return to try once more to recover the Holy Land. The Sultan, with a politeneſs which would have done honour to the moſt refined age, replied, that if it muſt be his misfortune to loſe that part of his dominions, he had rather it ſhould be to the king of England, than to any other monarch in the world[f]. The gallant Richard embarked for Europe to endure a long captivity, and find an early grave; and the ſpace of a few months after his departure from the Holy Land terminated the life of Saladin.

Hiſtorians have recorded the details of no leſs than ſeven different cruſades, including a period of an hundred and ſeventy-five years; in which time numerous armies were led to diſgrace the Chriſtian name in the Eaſt. The two laſt cruſades were undertaken by Louis the ninth, king of France, whoſe fleet conveyed a well-appointed and numerous

[f] Rapin, vol. i. p. 252. fol.

army to the coaſts of Egypt [g]; and there, after an ineffectual diſplay of valour, he was made priſoner, with the greateſt part of his nobles. All who could not redeem their lives at an exceſſive ranſom were maſſacred by the barbarous Mahometans, and the walls of Cairo were covered with Chriſtian heads. The king of France was loaded with chains; but his deliverance, with that of many of his ſoldiers, was obtained by the reſtitution of Damietta, and the payment of an immenſe ſum of gold. After ſixteen years of repoſe this enterpriſing and bigotted monarch again embarked from France, and undertook the wild project of ſailing to baptize the king of Tunis [h]. On the barren ſands of Africa, his army, exhauſted by fatigue, and ſinking under the influence of a burning climate, was quickly reduced to inconſiderable numbers. Louis expired in his tent; and at the moment of his death his ſon and ſucceſſor gave the ſignal for retreat.

After the loſs of Jeruſalem, the city of Acre, from which it was diſtant about 70 miles, became the metropolis of the Latin Chriſtians. There the different powers of Europe, and the Maſters of the Hoſpital, the

[g] A. D. 1248. [h] A. D. 1270.

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Temple, and the Teutonic order, aſſumed an independent command over a promiſcuous multitude of pilgrims and fugitives. To avenge the plunder of ſome Mahometan villages, and the murder of ſome Syrian merchants, the ſultan Khalil beſieged and ſtormed it, and 60,000 Chriſtians were doomed to death or captivity. The loſs of Acre was in fact the loſs of the Holy Land; and the memorable year 1291 terminated the folly, fanaticiſm, and unprofitable valour of the Chriſtians in the cruſades.

That theſe wars were upon the whole diſaſtrous and unfortunate can be no ſubject of ſurpriſe, when we conſider the manners and the diſpoſitions of thoſe who engaged in them, and the difficulties, with which they were obliged to contend. Actuated by romantic fervour, and confident of victory, their plans were always uniform; and, in their ſubſequent expeditions, they rarely profited by the miſcarriage of thoſe that preceded. Jealous and vindictive, they agreed only in wearing the badge of the Croſs, and were torn by inteſtine diviſions and feuds: they therefore never co-operated with perfect cordiality, when they reached the field of action. Depredation and bloodſhed marked their ſteps

in the countries through which they paſſed; and they rouſed the vengeance, inſtead of conciliating the affections, of the Chriſtian Greeks, as well as of the Mahometan Syrians.

The remoteneſs of Paleſtine from Europe, and the nature of the climate, ought likewiſe not to be diſregarded. The cruſaders, whether they marched by way of Conſtantinople, or embarked from the ports of Italy, if we conſider their total inexperience in remote expeditions, muſt have been greatly diminiſhed in numbers, and weakened by fatigue, before they reached the field of action. The burning heat of Syria, the want of proviſions, the ſcarcity of water, and the conſequent diſeaſes, muſt have deprived them of much of that energy and vigour, ſo eſſentially neceſſary to their ſucceſs. They were oppoſed by intrepid and active foes, as enthuſiaſtic in the cauſe of their Prophet, as the Chriſtians were in behalf of their Redeemer; acting in concert, ſuperior in the various arts of war, fighting in their own country, and able to avail themſelves of all its advantages and reſources.

Theſe wars diſplay in the ſtrongeſt light the

the influence of the Papal power. The pontiffs ſummoned the princes of Europe to arms, ſent them to conquer new kingdoms, in order to enlarge the dominions of the holy ſee, regulated even beyond the boundaries of the ocean the conduct of kings and emperors, and thus exerciſed a ſupreme and univerſal ſovereignty.

If we endeavour to trace the various cauſes, which led to the cruſades, we ſhall find, that the opinions, manners, and prejudices of the Europeans of the middle ages, all conſpired to precipitate them into theſe enterprizes, without any conſideration of the injuſtice, inhumanity, or impolicy of their conduct.

Vain would it have been for any enlightened Chriſtian at that time to have urged, in order to quench the flame of fanaticiſm, and ſpare the effuſion of blood, that the cruſaders had no right to wreſt Judea from the hands of its poſſeſſors; and that their zeal for the recovery of Bethlehem, or Calvary, the places where the Son of God was born and had died, could not juſtify their violation of the moral precepts of his Goſpel. To ſuch arguments as theſe the ſuperſtitious would not have liſtened; the cauſe was too deeply implicated

plicated with their darling paſſions and prejudices, to be decided by an appeal to ſober reaſon, or the genuine dictates of Chriſtianity.

Their religious enthuſiaſm was greatly augmented by their paſſion for war. Commerce, manufactures, and arts, were at that time, if conſidered as general and national, occupations in a ſtate of infancy, and the maſs of the people were deſtitute of regular employment. They caught with eagerneſs at any occaſion, which relieved them from a ſtate of inactivity, and afforded room for the indulgence of their favourite inclinations. In the time of the cruſades, chivalry began to flouriſh; and thoſe knights, who were inſpired with a romantic deſire to travel in queſt of adventures, turned their eyes with eagerneſs to Aſia, which promiſed to open ſuch new ſcenes of enterprize and glory, as could not be found in Europe. Perſons of inferior rank flattered themſelves with the moſt ſanguine expectations of conqueſt, were confident that victory would attend their ſteps, and that they ſhould return home loaded with the ſpoils of the Eaſt.

Such was the origin of this ſpirit of enter-

prize

prize. The great privileges and immunities granted to the cruſaders may ſerve to account for its long continuance in Europe. The Popes proclaimed a complete indulgence and pardon for crimes to every one who would take up arms in the cauſe. Of this ſacrifice to licentiouſneſs and immorality, the profligate and vicious took advantage, and eagerly embraced a profeſſion, which made war, plunder, and conqueſt a duty. If they ſucceeded in this undertaking, they were aſſured that abundant riches would enable them to live happily on earth; and if they fell victims to a ſervice ſo meritorious, they were perſuaded that the gates of heaven would be open to them, and that, without requiring any other proof of their obedience to the laws of Chriſtianity, they ſhould obtain the crown of martyrdom.

There was another motive, which operated as a ſtrong inducement to the multitudes who aſſumed the badge of the Croſs. At the cloſe of the tenth, and the beginning of the eleventh century, it was the prevailing opinion, that the world would ſhortly come to an end, and that the Saviour of mankind would make his ſecond appearance on mount Calvary. This was the ſubject of extenſive

alarm

alarm and anxious expectation; and the pilgrims to the Holy Land ſet out from Europe, with a determination to die there, or to wait the advent of their Lord.

When we conſider theſe various cauſes as gradually operating, for a conſiderable ſpace of time, upon the minds of the credulous, the ſuperſtitious, and the adventurous, we ſhall be leſs ſurpriſed at the vaſt multitudes who reſorted to the ſtandard of the Croſs, erected in the firſt cruſade by Urban the ſecond, or who in ſucceeding expeditions, regardleſs of the defeats and loſſes of their predeceſſors, trod in their ſteps to meet the ſame fate.

The conſtant demand of recruits to ſupply the armies deſtined for the Holy Land was very hurtful to the population of Europe; and the evils reſulting from this drain of its inhabitants continued to be felt for a conſiderable time. Few diſadvantages however could ariſe from getting rid of a multitude of perſons, whoſe chief delight conſiſted in rapine and plunder; or who, for want of the employments furniſhed by manufactures, trade, and commerce, lived in idleneſs and poverty.

Rude and ignorant as the cruſaders were, they

they could not travel through and continue in ſo many intereſting countries with indifference; or behold their various cuſtoms and inſtitutions, without acquiring information and improvement. Among the Greeks they ſurveyed the productions of the fine arts, and the precious remains of antiquity, the magnificence of the eaſtern court, and the models of extenſive and curious manufactories. In Aſia they beheld the traces of the knowledge and arts, which the patronage of the Caliphs had diffuſed through their empire. Every object which ſtruck their attention pointed out a far higher ſtate of improvement than their own countries had reached; every object, therefore, while it excited the wonder of them all, could not fail to excite a ſpirit of imitation among thoſe who were active and ingenious. As theſe new ſcenes preſented themſelves, their eyes were gradually opened to a more extenſive proſpect of the world, and they acquired new modes of thinking, felt a ſenſe of new wants, and a taſte for new gratifications.

Various advantages, many of which were neither foreſeen nor expected by the projectors of theſe enterpriſes, were derived from the holy wars. It is a remark juſtified

by

by the experience of ages, that the inhabitants of the weſtern world are diſtinguiſhed by a peculiar acuteneſs of obſervation, an active and imitative ſpirit, and a great energy of character. In the courſe of their expedition, they acquired a taſte for the arts and ſciences; and the example of the Arabian and Syrian merchants taught them the value of trade, and the uſe of ſeveral manufactures. In the ſuperior refinements of Cairo and Conſtantinople, they diſcovered various commodities worth importing into Europe. From this period is dated the introduction of ſilk and ſugar, which were conveyed into Italy from Greece and Egypt; and the advantages which reſulted from a more enlarged and adventurous traffic to the Piſans, the Genoeſe, and the Venetians, who laid the foundation of the modern commercial ſyſtem. The cruſaders began that intercourſe with the Eaſt, which under the pacific forms of commerce has continued with little interruption ever ſince. On their return to Europe, they introduced a new taſte in buildings, a more ſuperb diſplay of magnificence on public occaſions, the rich manufactures of Aſia, together with a more romantic ſpirit of enterprize, and the firſt improvements in learning and ſcience.

The

The moſt beneficial effects of the cruſades were viſible in the alteration, which they occaſioned in the ſtate of property, by the emancipation of vaſſals from the tyranny of their lords, and by increaſing the growing independence of the feudal tenants. Many of the great barons, unable to ſupport the expences incurred by their expeditions to Paleſtine, ſold their hereditary poſſeſſions. The monarchs of different countries took advantage of theſe opportunities of annexing conſiderable territories to their dominions, and purchaſed them at a ſmall expence. The fiefs likewiſe of thoſe barons who died in the holy wars without heirs, reverted to their reſpective ſovereigns; and by theſe poſſeſſions being taken from one ſcale, and thrown into the other, the regal power increaſed in proportion as that of the nobility declined. The great cities of Italy, which had begun to turn their attention towards commerce, were impatient to ſhake off the yoke of their inſolent lords, and to eſtabliſh ſuch a government, as would make property ſecure, and the exerciſe of induſtry ſafe and eaſy. They purchaſed or extorted large immunities and grants from the emperors of Germany; and other countries, particularly France, followed their example.

The great barons were eager to lay hold of this new expedient for raiſing money by the ſales of charters of independence and enfranchiſement to the towns within their domains; and, in order to procure immediate relief for their exigencies, they diſregarded the conſequences which might reſult from the eſtabliſhment, and the aſcendancy of municipal power. Thus commenced the privileges granted to corporations, and the rights acquired by communities of citizens. The benefits, which accrued to the public at large by theſe conceſſions, were of the higheſt importance, as they were favourable to government and good order, to the extenſion of freedom, and the exertions of diligence, the more regular and uniform adminiſtration of juſtice, and the general improvement of the condition of the inferior claſſes of ſociety. Thus we may obſerve the beneficial effects of the cruſades, in producing a new order of things, and erecting the firſt ſtrong and durable barrier againſt the licentiouſneſs, rapine, diſcord, and tyranny of that martial ariſtocracy, commonly known by the name of the Feudal Syſtem, which had ſo long violated the rights of juſtice and humanity, and enſlaved the naio ns of Europe.

III. *The Institution of Chivalry.*

Although the extravagancies of knight-errantry, and the marvellous and incredible ſtories related in the old romances of the champions, who went forth in ſearch of adventures into all parts of the world, have been made the entertaining ſubjects of burleſque deſcription, particularly in the well-known works of Cervantes, Rabelais, and Butler; yet we muſt not miſtake imaginary for real chivalry. The former exiſted only in the old romances, and as ſuch was the object at which theſe celebrated writers aimed their ſucceſsful ridicule and ſatire: but we ſhall find, on examining the origin and progreſs of the latter, that it was a noble and a beneficial inſtitution, the reſult of an enlightened policy, conſidering the times in which it was eſtabliſhed; that it increaſed the glory of the nations in which it flouriſhed; and had a very powerful effect in alleviating the evils of the feudal ſyſtem, and refining the manners of the higher ranks of ſociety. In times when robbery, oppreſſion, barbarity, and licentiouſneſs, prevailed in moſt of the countries of Europe, it ſupplied in many inſtances, although imperfectly, the place of law; and in the hands of valour,

valour, was the inſtrument of humanity and juſtice.

If chivalry be conſidered only as a ſimple ceremony, by which the noble youths who were deſtined for war received their firſt arms, the cuſtom was known among the ancient Germans, and was eſtabliſhed in France in the reign of Charlemagne, at the commencement of the ninth century. That emperor ſent to Aquitain for his ſon Louis, and preſented him with a ſword, and all the equipage of a warrior. But if we look upon chivalry as a dignity, which gave the firſt military rank, and which was conferred by a particular kind of inveſtiture, attended with appropriate ceremonies, and ratified by a ſolemn oath, it would be difficult to trace it to a more remote period than the eleventh century[i].

[i] Memoires ſur l'ancienne Chevalerie par de la Carne de St. Palaye. Academ. des Inſcriptions, tom. xx. p. 597, &c. In this very curious and entertaining work I have found ſuch reſearches into this pleaſing ſubject, as I have elſewhere ſought in vain. The ingenious dialogue "on Chivalry and Romance," by the Biſhop of Worceſter, led me to this copious ſource of information, from which I have derived the greateſt part of my ſtatement.

France

France claims the honour of giving this institution its ſpecific character at the time when that kingdom was recovering from the diſorders, which followed the extinction of the ſecond race of its monarchs. The royal authority began again to be reſpected, laws were enacted, corporations were founded, and the numerous fiefs held by the great barons under the crown, were governed with greater regularity. It was in this ſtate of affairs, that the ſovereigns and the great lords were deſirous of ſtrengthening the feudal ties by adding to the ceremony of doing homage, that of giving arms to their young vaſſals, previous to their firſt military expeditions. It is highly probable, that by conferring the ſame honourable diſtinction upon other perſons, who did not hold any lands under them, but who offered their ſervices from motives of eſteem, or the deſire of military renown, the ſovereigns and great barons availed themſelves of this expedient to ſecure the cooperation of new warriors, who were ready to follow their ſtandard upon all occaſions, when they could only rely upon their own dependants to ſerve them in certain diſtricts for a limited time. They received with joy theſe brave volunteers, who, by increaſing their forces, gave additional ſtrength

ſtrength to their power; and as every knight had the privilege of creating other knights, the ſovereign exerciſed, without exciting jealouſy, a privilege, which he poſſeſſed in common with others. Every gentleman who was deſigned for the profeſſion of arms was trained by a long preparatory courſe of diſcipline and ſervice in ſome noble family, and was during his youth the companion of ſome warrior of renown. The ceremonies which attended his knighthood were ſolemn and impreſſive. They combined the rites of religion with the forms of feudal duty; and reſembled the mode of admitting a proſelyte into the church, as well as that of a vaſſal doing homage for a fief. The candidate for this diſtinction, accompanied by his ſponſors and his prieſt, paſſed the night previous to his initiation in watching his arms, and in the duties of prayer. The next morning he repaired to the bath, the water of which was intended to ſerve as an emblem of the purity of his profeſſion. He then walked to the neareſt church, clothed in white garments, and preſented his ſword to the miniſter officiating at the altar, who returned it to him with his benediction. After taking the accuſtomed oaths to his ſovereign, or feudal chief, he was inveſted by the attendant

knights and ladies with certain parts of his armour. He was firſt preſented with golden ſpurs, a coat of mail, and gauntlets; and laſtly he was begirt with a ſword. The ſovereign then, riſing from his throne, conferred upon him, whilſt kneeling, the honours of knighthood, by giving him three ſtrokes with the flat part of a drawn ſword upon his ſhoulders or neck. He then ſaluted the young warrior, and pronounced theſe words: "In the name of God, of St. Michael, and St. George, I make thee a knight: be brave, bold, and loyal." His horſe and the remaining part of his armour were afterwards preſented to him, and the ceremony was concluded with a coſtly banquet[k].

Important and numerous were the privileges attached to this profeſſion of arms, and its duties were at once arduous and indiſpenſable. To protect the ladies was an eſſential part of them. Incapable of taking arms for the preſervation of their property, and deſtitute of the means to prove the purity of their characters, if attacked by malevolence or ſlander, they would frequently in thoſe uncivilized times, when law and juſtice were ſilenced by violence and force, have ſeen their lands

[k] Palaye, p. 666, &c.

become a prey to ſome tyrannical neighbour, or have had their reputation blaſted by the breath of calumny, if ſome knight had not come forward in their defence. To the ſuccour of the diſtreſſed, the protection of orphans, the emancipation of captives, and the chaſtiſement of oppreſſion, he likewiſe dedicated his ſword and his life. If he failed in a ſcrupulous attention to theſe benevolent offices, he was looked upon as deſerting the moſt ſolemn obligations, and was degraded from his rank with public marks of diſhonour. If he performed them with activity and ſpirit, he was regarded as an honour to his profeſſion, and his renown was ſpread over every part of Europe.

In the character of a true knight during the golden age of chivalry, we behold an aſſemblage of virtues, which command our eſteem and admiration, and confer the moſt honourable diſtinction upon human nature. His air was noble, his deportment manly, and his manners condeſcending and gracious to all. His promiſe was inviolable and ſacred; and he chaſtiſed that falſehood in others, which was the peculiar object of his abhorrence. His love of arms was ſoftened by the refinements of courteſy, the fair offſpring

ſpring of that high-born and noble ſociety, which he enjoyed in the caſtles of the great. His profeſſions of attachment and ſervice were invariably ſincere; and all his actions were dictated by courage, and guided by honour. He was as ambitious to render his name illuſtrious by affability, probity, generoſity, and benevolence, as by the extent and number of his expeditions, trophies, and victories. Such was the conduct, which ſignalized thoſe whom their contemporaries celebrated as the faireſt ornaments of chivalry, and whoſe renown has been tranſmitted through all ſucceeding ages. Such is an imperfect portrait of Gaſton de Foix, of Louis le Trimouille, of Edward the black Prince, of the Chevalier Bayard, and of Sir Philip Sidney.

Theſe were the initiatory ceremonies, the marks of dignity, and the qualities of a true knight, during the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries; when high birth and fortune were held in the public eſtimation far inferior to plebeian merit; when the badges and titles of diſtinction were inſeparable from virtue, and knighthood was eſteemed ſo truly and univerſally honourable, that

even kings ſolicited it from the hands of their ſubjects.

A knight was always known by a device on his ſhield, and the peculiarities of his blaſonry, which were alluſive to ſome of his martial exploits. Great honours were paid to him after his deceaſe, particularly if he was ſlain in battle. His funeral was moſt ſolemn, and very fully attended. His ſword, helmet, ſpurs, and armorial enſigns, were ſuſpended over the hallowed ſpot of his interment, or his cenotaph. His ſplendid tomb, graced with his effigy, and marked with a ſuitable inſcription, was conſidered as a tribute of the juſteſt reſpect to his virtues, and as a powerful incentive to inflame the youthful warrior to tread the ſame path of valour and renown.

Chivalry was much indebted to religion, for the ardour with which its votaries were animated. Such was the ſuperſtition of the times, that no inſtitution of a public nature could have obtained reputation in the world, which was not conſecrated by the church, and cloſely interwoven with the religious opinions of the times. To the incentives of zeal

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were added, the ſpirit of gallantry, and a romantic attachment to the fair ſex. The youthful knight, previous to his going forth upon any warlike expedition, devoted himſelf to the ſervice of ſome lady, who was uſually the object of his ardent love. It was his moſt lively hope that her ſmiles and her hand would reward his valour: he bore her device upon his arms; to her he conſecrated his trophies; and to gain her favour and approbation, he was ready upon all occaſions to meet danger, and to ſhed his blood. This paſſion was the keeneſt incitement, that was given to his heroic actions, and fired his mind with unabating enthuſiaſm. Amid foreign invaſion, or domeſtic feuds, where the oppoſing barons and their vaſſals encountered each other in the hotteſt engagements; the faithful knight, as he couched his lance, and ruſhed to meet the foe, invoked the miſtreſs of his heart, and gloried by his achievements to render himſelf worthy of her regard. When peace brought a ſhort interval of repoſe, and rival knights contended in the juſts and tournaments, the applauding lady often adjudged the prizes to the victorious champions, and rewarded the valour which ſhe had inſpired. In the lofty hall decked with banners and trophies of war, when the banquet

was given to the jocund train of nobles, and their gallant companions in arms; the harp and the ſongs of the minſtrel reſounded the praiſes of the fair; and every pageant and celebrity concurred to keep the mind in the ſame direction to its beloved object.

The ambition of pleaſing a favourite lady, and of being worthy to be conſidered as her champion in the field of battle, as well as in the tournaments, was a motive which ſtimulated a knight to the moſt heroic actions, and animated him with the moſt determined valour. Many inſtances are recorded in the hiſtory of the middle ages, of the height to which this romantic gallantry aroſe[l]. It was not unuſual for a knight in the midſt of a battle or a ſiege, to challenge his enemy to ſingle combat, and refer to the deciſion of arms the tranſcendent excellence of their ladies.

We have before taken occaſion to obſerve, that the treatment of women in Greece and Rome was harſh and degrading[m]. They were confined to a ſtate of ſecluſion from the world, had few attentions paid to them, and were allowed to take little ſhare in the general intercourſe of life. The northern nations,

[l] Palaye, p. 653. [m] See page 340.

on

on the contrary, paid a kind of devotion to the female ſex, conſidered them as endowed with ſuperior and even divine qualities, gave them a ſeat in their public councils, and followed their ſtandard to battle. Theſe fierce barbarians in the courſe of their ravages in the Roman empire, when they involved the monuments of ancient art in deſtruction, and purſued their enemies in arms with the moſt bloody ſeverity, always forbore to offer violence to women. They introduced into the weſt of Europe the reſpectful gallantry of the north; and this benevolence of ſentiment was cheriſhed and matured by the inſtitution of chivalry [n]. Woman, inſtead of having only a retired place in ſociety, was brought forward into the moſt conſpicuous point of view, ſhe became the umpire of valour, the arbitreſs of victory, and at once the incentive and the reward of courageous actions. Naturally elated at beholding the power of her charms, ſhe became worthy of the heroiſm which ſhe inſpired, improved in the dignity of her character, and formed her ſentiments upon the pureſt principles of honour. The diſtinguiſhed proweſs of the knight was counterbalanced by the ſtrict and ſpotleſs chaſtity of the lady,

[n] Robertſon's Charles V. vol. i. p. 82, &c. Modern Europe, vol. ii. p. 208, &c.

and

and theſe virtues long continued to countenance and to reward each other: they were encouraged by the modes, the habits, and the circumſtances of the times, and found ample room for growth and expanſion in the baronial ſtates.

Thus it appears, that in the inſtitution of chivalry were blended valour, humanity, juſtice, honour, courteſy, and gallantry. Their combined effects were ſoon viſible upon the manners of a martial age. The horrors of war were ſoftened, when humanity began to be eſteemed the ornament of knighthood. More condeſcenſion and more affability were introduced, when courteſy was recommended as the moſt amiable of knightly virtues. A rigid adherence to truth, with the moſt religious attention to every engagement, became the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of every gentleman, becauſe chivalry was regarded as the ſchool of honour. It is the remark of the excellent hiſtorian, to whoſe works I confeſs myſelf under ſingular obligations in purſuing this and ſimilar inquiries, " that, perhaps, the humanity which accompanies all the operations of war, the refinements of gallantry, and the point of honour, the three chief circumſtances, which diſtinguiſh modern from ancient

ancient manners, may be attributed in a great meaſure to this whimſical inſtitution [o]."

The diſpoſitions and ſentiments, which it produced were ſo deeply rooted, that they continued to predominate, long after the ſpirit of chivalry itſelf had evaporated, and the inſtitution began to decline and degenerate. The love of action, the ſpirit of benevolence, and a more correct mode of thinking—the virtues, which had either given it birth, or been aſſociated with it, when once directed to objects that fired ambition, and intereſted the affections, were not likely to be ſhort in their duration, or partial in their effects. The refined aſſiduities of men naturally directed the attention of women to themſelves, as well as to their admirers. The acknowledgment of the importance of the female char cter produced a conſiderable improvement in female education. Thus gradually

[o] Robertſon's Charles V. vol. i. p. 85. The claſſical reader cannot fail to be ſtruck with the coincidence in the political ſtate of ancient Greece, as deſcribed by Homer, and the condition of the feudal times. The military ardour of the heroes is ſimilar to that of the barons. What are the Grecian Bacchus, Hercules, and Theſeus, but knights-errant, and the exact counterparts of Sir Launcelot, and Amadis de Gaul? Generoſity, courteſy, and hoſpitality, were the virtues common to them both.

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was the merit of the ſexes raiſed, and they were better entitled to the eſtimation of each other. The men, quitting the inſipidity of artificial compliment, and the hyperbolical ſtyle of paſſion, which had marked the intercourſe of the feudal times, became more attentive to ſimplicity and truth, more engaging in their addreſs, and ſofter in their manners. The women became ſenſible of the importance of ſupporting a dignity of behaviour, of improving their talents for converſation, and of adorning the charms of nature with elegant accompliſhments, and the graces of affability and complaiſance.

Thus has a great change of manners been effected, by following up a leading principle of the inſtitution of chivalry, and giving a conſpicuous place to the female ſex in the ranks of ſociety. The paſſion of love, purified by delicacy, has been heightened by the pleaſures of ſentiment and imagination; the ſphere of converſation has been enlarged and meliorated; it has gained more propriety, more vivacity, more wit, and more variety; ſocial intercourſe has been diveſted of formality, and is regulated by the laws of true politeneſs. It has opened new ſources of ſatisfaction to the underſtanding, and afforded new

new delights to the heart. The characters both of men and women have been marked by more amiable qualities, and the ſtock of refined pleaſures and ſocial happineſs has been in the greateſt degree increaſed.

IV. *The Reformation of Religion.*

There is perhaps no occurrence recorded in the annals of mankind, ſince the firſt publication of Chriſtianity, which has had ſo conſiderable an influence in vindicating the rights of conſcience, in liberating the powers of the mind from the tyranny of ſuperſtition, and in the promotion of general knowledge, as the reformation of religion in the ſixteenth century. Previous to this auſpicious event, all Europe bowed beneath the yoke of the Church of Rome, and trembled at the name of her ſovereigns. The laws, which were iſſued from the Vatican, held emperors, kings, and all their ſubjects, in the chains of obedience, or rather of ſlavery; and to reſiſt their authority, or to examine their reaſonableneſs, required a vigour of underſtanding, and an energy of character, of which for many ages few examples were to be found. Waldus in the twelfth century, Wickliff in the fourteenth, and Huſs in the fifteenth, had inveighed againſt the errors of Popery

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with great boldneſs, and expoſed them with great ingenuity: but their attempts to inſtruct the minds of the ignorant and illiterate were premature and ineffectual. Such feeble lights, incapable of diſpelling the thick darkneſs, which enveloped the Church, were ſoon extinguiſhed: at length, however, it was the gracious act of Providence to raiſe up Martin Luther, as the choſen inſtrument of its auſpicious deſigns [p].

This great Reformer was born of poor parents at Eiſleben in Saxony [q]. He received a learned education, and in his youth diſcovered great acuteneſs and vigour of underſtanding. He firſt devoted himſelf to a monaſtic life in a convent of Auguſtinian friars, and afterward was appointed by Frederic, elector of Saxony, profeſſor of philoſophy and theology in the new univerſity of Wittemberg. Having found a copy of the Bible, which had long been neglected, in the library of his convent, he abandoned all other purſuits, and devoted himſelf to the ſtudy of the Scriptures. The light of truth beamed upon his mind—he ſaw that Chriſtianity was not

[p] See Interpreter of Prophecy, vol. ii. p. 41. 4th ed.

[q] Born 1483. His opinions widely diffuſed in 1518. Died 1546, aged 63 years.

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to be learned from the writings of the ſchoolmen, or the decrees of general councils, but from the authority of the ſacred Writings alone. An opportunity was ſoon afforded him of ſhowing his zeal for truth, and his ardour for its propagation. The Dominican monks were at that time employed by pope Leo X. to ſell indulgences for all offences and crimes, for the purpoſe of recruiting his exhauſted treaſury. Luther, with great boldneſs of manner, and ſtrength of argument, preached againſt the irregularity of their lives, and the vicious tendency of their doctrines; and he repreſented to the people the extreme danger of relying for ſalvation on any other means than thoſe appointed by the word of God. The more he examined the claims of the Church of Rome to its empire over the reaſon and conſcience of mankind, the more he aſcertained their weakneſs. The diſcovery of one error naturally led him to the detection of others; and from refuting the extravagant tenets concerning indulgences, he proceeded to expoſe ſuch as were maintained reſpecting pilgrimages and penances, the interceſſion and the worſhip of ſaints, the abuſes of auricular confeſſion, the exiſtence of purgatory, and many other doctrines of the ſame kind, which have no foundation in

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Scripture. His arguments made a deep impreſſion upon his hearers, and his fame was ſoon ſpread not only through Germany, but various other parts of Europe [r].

At the ſame time that by his ſermons he was diffuſing the principles of the reformation, and his writings contributed materially to the ſame purpoſe, nothing proved more fatal to the intereſts of the Church of Rome, or more ſubverſive of its opinions, than his tranſlation of the Bible into the German language. The copies of it were rapidly diſperſed, and peruſed with the greateſt avidity by perſons of all ranks. They were aſtoniſhed at diſcovering how contrary the precepts of the great Author of their religion were to the comments and the inventions of thoſe, who had ſo long pretended to be the faithful interpreters of his Word. Having now in their own hands the genuine rule of faith, they thought themſelves qualified to judge of the eſtabliſhed opinions, and to pronounce whether they were conformable to the ſtandard of Scripture, or deviated from it. The great advantages, which reſulted from this celebrated tranſlation of the Bible, encouraged

[r] The late amiable Mr. Seward has collected ſome pleaſing anecdotes of Luther, Anecdotes, vol. iii. p. 112.

the advocates for the reformation in other countries to follow this example; and by publiſhing verſions in their reſpective languages, they materially promoted the general cauſe [q].

Luther had the ſatisfaction to receive the moſt important aſſiſtance from men of learning and abilities. Melancthon, famed for his genius, learning, moderation, and piety, was the author of the confeſſion of Augſburg, preſented by the Proteſtants to the emperor Charles V. at the diet held in that place. Bucer introduced the doctrines of Luther into the imperial cities upon the Rhine; and Olaus diſſeminated them with equal zeal in Sweden, his native country. Zuinglius and Calvin, men not inferior to the great Reformer himſelf in zeal and intrepidity, were active in Switzerland. However they diſagreed in their doctrines from each other, and whatever errors marked ſome of their opinions, they all co-operated with the moſt perfect harmony in the promotion of this great and perilous deſign. The oppoſition made by the ſee of Rome to the divorce of Henry VIII.

[q] Robertſon's Charles V. vol. ii. p. 113, &c. Hiſtory of Modern Europe, vol. ii. p. 194, &c. Gilpin's Lives of the Reformers. Burnet's Hiſtory of the Reformation.

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from his queen Catharine, haſtened the introduction of the reformed opinions into England. The acute and learned Eraſmus was far from being an inconſiderable coadjutor to Luther. His numerous works prepared the way for the reception of the new doctrines. He confuted many of the Romiſh errors with great weight of argument, and force of eloquence. In his ſatirical writings, likewiſe, he held up to deriſion the frauds practiſed by the monks to impoſe upon the credulity of the people; and there was ſcarcely any error, which Luther endeavoured to reform, which had not been treated by Eraſmus, either with cenſure or raillery [r].

The character of Luther was ſuch as exactly qualified him for a reformer, at the particular period when he ſtood forth as the champion of the Proteſtant faith. His abilities were of the firſt order, ſtrong by nature,

[r] "Quid ego potuiſſem opitulari Luthero, ſi me periculi comitem feciſſem, niſi ut pro uno perirent duo? Quod ſi omnia pie ſcripſiſſet, non tamen erat animus ob veritatem capite periclitari. Non omnes ad martyrium ſatis habent roboris. Vereor, ne ſi quid inciderit tumultus, Petrum ſim imitaturus." Eraſmi Epiſt. 583. See an account of this accompliſhed ſcholar and refined ſatiriſt, in Warton on the Genius of Pope, vol. i. p. 187.

and improved by ſtudy. His ſanctity of life was conformable to the pure doctrines, which he taught. His diligence in detecting the errors of his opponents, and in propagating his own opinions, was ever active and indefatigable. He had an ardour of temper, which ſometimes broke out into vehemence and impetuoſity ;—the effect of his courage and zeal in the cauſe of truth. From every inſtance of oppoſition his undaunted ſpirit derived freſh energy; he readily obeyed the ſummons of the ſovereign Pontiff, and ſtood unmoved before his legate, prepared as he was, not to retract, but to juſtify his opinions. He afterwards in the preſence of numerous ſpectators burnt the bull of excommunication, which had been iſſued againſt him. Conſcious of the rectitude of his motives, he was bold to aſſert and prompt to execute his deſigns. In his controverſies he was regardleſs of the rank or quality of his opponents, and treated Henry VIII. with the ſame opprobrious language, which he uſed to Tetzel, or Eccius, the ignoble advocates for the ſee of Rome. Had he been leſs harſh and ſevere in his cenſures, and leſs vehement in his invectives, he would not have ſuited the rude manners of the times. Had he addreſſed his countrymen in a voice of leſs au-

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thority and boldneſs, he would not have awakened them from the lethargy of ſuperſtition, in which they were entranced: and if he had been leſs confident in his own talents, and the goodneſs of his cauſe, he would not have ſpread his opinions with ſuch rapidity, and carried them to ſuch an extent. Unaided by power, and unaſſiſted by force of arms, he ſhook the throne of the Popes, and ſubverted a great part of the vaſt fabric of their eccleſiaſtical dominion, which had been raiſed with conſummate art, and whoſe foundations were deeply laid. This difficult taſk he accompliſhed by turning the current of public opinion againſt it. He imparted to mankind the light of reaſon and revelation, and enabled them to diſcern the errors, the frauds, and the uſurpations of the ſee of Rome; and he taught them to vindicate the rights of reaſon, conſcience, and the Goſpel. He had the ſatisfaction to live to ſee whole provinces and kingdoms adopt his opinions with the higheſt reſpect, and ſubſcribe to his deciſions with the moſt implicit deference. He was liſtened to with that fixed and ſteady attention, which truth, when accompanied by novelty, is always ſure to command. And by an extraordinary inſtance of divine favour, particularly ſignal, if we conſider the ferocious

cious manners of his contemporaries, and the intolerant ſpirit of his enemies, he had the happineſs to end his life with compoſure and peace, in his native city, in the midſt of his own family. For the invaluable benefits, conferred by the great Reformer upon his own age, and upon all poſterity, he ſtands diſtinguiſhed among the benefactors of the human race, and is entitled to the praiſe, gratitude, and veneration of mankind.

The oppoſition, which was raiſed againſt the opinions of the reformers, contributed to produce the effect, which it was the deſign of their enemies to prevent. Their ſevere edicts, and even their bloody perſecutions, made perhaps as many proſelytes to the Proteſtant faith, as the bold invectives of Luther, the wit and learning of Eraſmus, the vehemence of Calvin, and the perſuaſive mildneſs of Melancthon. In vain did Henry VIII. of England diſplay his polemical ſkill, and obtain the title of Defender of the Faith from the Pope, as a reward for his attack on Luther. In vain were repeated diets aſſembled for the condemnation of his opinions. In vain did the crafty Charles V. of Germany enter into an alliance with pope Paul III. for the expreſs purpoſe of extirpating what they ſtigmatized

matized with the name of heresy. It was to no purpose that the Protestants were forbid under the most heavy penalties to teach any doctrine contrary to the decrees of the council of Trent. Even the massacre of Bartholomew, perpetrated by the sanguinary Charles IX. of France, produced no permanent injury to the Protestant cause. And with as little effect did Mary, in a spirit of bigotry equally cruel and infuriate, commit the holy martyrs of England to the flames. The same consequences ensued, which had originally taken place at the first publication of Christianity. The rage of persecution tended only to stimulate the curiosity and excite the compassion of mankind; and their inquiries led to the multiplication of converts, wherever the blood of the martyrs was shed.

Many causes led to the success and popularity of the reformed opinions. The schisms in the Church of Rome, the profligate characters of the Popes, and the dissolute lives and intolerant dispositions of the Clergy, had made the people disgusted with an establishment, which under the mask of religion not only encouraged immorality, but granted indulgences for great and flagrant crimes. The recent invention of printing gave a rapid cir-

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culation to the writings of the reformers, and particularly to the various verſions of the Bible. And the revival of learning conduced to open the minds of men to free inquiry, and critical reſearches. Thus did the peculiar circumſtances of the times, and the favourable conjuncture of various events, unite to crown the labours of Luther with ſucceſs. Nor muſt we ever loſe ſight of that great cauſe, into which all the reſt may be reſolved, the ſupreme direction of divine Providence, which at this auſpicious period ſhed the radiant beams of its goodneſs and truth upon a long-benighted world.

The Reformation not only narrowed the dominions of the ſovereign Pontiffs, but obliged them to adopt a different mode of conduct, and to rule by new maxims of policy. Their behaviour was bent to the urgency of the times; from having been long tyrannical and imperious, they became condeſcending, gracious, and mild. Ever ſince the Reformation, they have continued to govern rather by addreſs and management, than by deſpotic authority; and ſuch has been the great decline of their power, that from wielding the ſceptre of Europe, and being the arbiters of all its affairs, they have

nearly been reduced to a level with the petty princes of Italy and Germany.

One great advantage consequent upon the Reformation has been the improvement not only of its advocates, but even of its enemies, in science, learning, and arts. It was found expedient thus to combat the reformers with their own weapons, and to efface the aspersions, which they threw upon the ignorance and licentiousness of the Papists. Hence the attention of the Romish Clergy has been directed to the cultivation of useful and elegant learning, to a degree unknown in former ages; and hence they have become as enlightened and well-informed as they were before remarkable for their ignorance.

Similar was the change in their morals: they found it was necessary to silence the clamour of their enemies by a superior propriety of conduct. They endeavoured to reach the standard, which the reformers, eminent for the purity and even the austerity of their manners, had set up. This amelioration extended to all the Papal countries; to France, to the see of Rome, and to the sovereign Pontiffs themselves. Their love of learning, their moderate use of power, and their

their other virtues, have made ſome atonement to the world for the follies and crimes of their predeceſſors.

Such have been the beneficial conſequences of an event, which, in a political as well as in a religious point of view, is a diſtinguiſhed object of regard and admiration. The Reformation has vindicated the rights of reaſon and conſcience; it has taught the duty, and diffuſed the bleſſings of toleration; and while it has held forth the Scriptures themſelves, as the proper and excluſive ſtandard of religious opinions, it has diſſeminated the genuine principles of Chriſtianity, purified the faith, improved the manners, and increaſed the virtue of mankind.

V. *The revival of Claſſical Learning.*

Alfred and Charlemagne, who may be conſidered as the earlieſt luminaries of the modern world, ſhed a ſtrong and vivid luſtre over the age in which they lived. They encouraged learning both by their example and patronage; but their endeavours were not ſufficiently effectual to overcome the groſs ignorance of their times. The ſchools, which they erected, were confined to churches and

and monasteries; and the contracted notions of the monks, who presided over them, partly arising from their recluse modes of life, and partly from their religious prejudices, rendered them wholly inadequate to the task of diffusing knowledge in any extensive circle. The reign of barbarism and ignorance continued, with little intermission, till the learning, which the Arabians had introduced into Spain, began to spread through the rest of Europe. This learning consisted in the fundamental parts of the mathematics, the study of medicine, and the philosophy of Aristotle, in its fullest extent. Several enlightened scholars, who had studied under the Arabians, undertook, at the beginning of the eleventh century, the education of youth, particularly in the cities of Italy, and afterwards in those of France, England, and Germany. To the prevalence and permanency of these branches of knowledge, the establishment of the universities of Europe, so general in the thirteenth century, was eminently conducive. Some indeed were founded rather earlier; and Paris and Oxford carry their pretensions to antiquity so high as the reigns of Charlemagne and Alfred: but the real claims of Paris are dated from the time of Philip Augustus, who flourished in the twelfth century,

tury. And it would be too heavy a taſk, even inclined as I may be to ſupport the high antiquity of my own Univerſity, if I was required to trace any literary inſtitution for the regular maintenance of ſtudents upon a collegiate plan, to a remoter period than the reign of Edward the firſt. Merton college was then founded by Walter de Merton, Lord Chancellor of England, and Biſhop of Rocheſter, in the year 1264[s]. Upon a careful examination of the pretenſions of the firſt great ſeminaries of education, the honoured title of Mother of the univerſities of Europe ſeems to be due to Bologna. It was within her walls, during the tumults and diſorders of the eleventh century, that learning firſt attempted to raiſe her head. In the ſucceeding age, the almoſt incredible number of 10,000 ſtudents were aſſembled there, and each country in Europe had its reſident regents and profeſſors. The ſtudies of the civil and canon law conſtituted the favourite and almoſt the excluſive objects of application. Paris directed the attention of her

[s] "Merton College ought to be the firſt, and the firſt now I have put it, becauſe it is the moſt ancient endowed houſe in Oxford, (ſome ſay in all the learned world) and the moſt famous for the education of learned men." Wood's Hiſtory and Antiquities of Oxford, p. 2.

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ſcholars to theology, and nearly with an equal degree of reputation. Oxford began at this time to acquire celebrity, and to rival, or rather to ſurpaſs the foreign univerſities in the ability of its profeſſors, and the concourſe of its members; for in the year 1340 they amounted, according to the account of the hiſtorian Speed, to not leſs than 30,000. Many other univerſities were not long after founded, particularly in Italy and France, and were all modelled upon the ſame plan as Bologna, Paris, and Oxford, with reſpect to their inſtitutions and ſtudies.

In theſe ſeminaries of learning, logic and ſcholaſtic divinity were for ages the reigning ſubjects of purſuit. The works of Ariſtotle were peruſed with the greateſt avidity; and the diſquiſitions of the commentators upon his Dialectics were ſo favourably received, that their authors almoſt totally eclipſed the fame of their great maſter himſelf. The ſyllogiſtic mode of reaſoning was applied to every topic, without diſcrimination, as the beſt inſtrument in the hands of a ſubtle diſputant to frame the moſt ſpecious arguments, and to perplex the plaineſt truths.

The public ſchools were the theatres, in which

which the ſtudents acquired and diſplayed their attainments, as they were filled with a great concourſe of auditors, who daily aſſembled to liſten to the clamorous debates of the ſeveral diſputants.

Upon the logic of Ariſtotle was founded the cultivation of ſcholaſtic theology and caſuiſtry. To make nice and metaphyſical diſtinctions between one word and another, to ſeparate ſubjects by infinite diviſions, not as the real nature of things, but as fancy ſuggeſted, and to draw concluſions which had no moral end whatever, were the inceſſant purſuits of the ſchoolmen. The ſkill, induſtry, and productions of the ſpider may ſerve to illuſtrate the texture and the flimſineſs of their literary labours. They have likewiſe been more ingeniouſly compared to thoſe Indians, who, by the curious arrangement of a few feathers, which form their only ſtock, compoſe a thouſand varieties of figure, and a perpetual change of picture. The names of Lanfranc, Abelard, Petrus Lombardus, Thomas Aquinas, and Duns Scotus, are the moſt eminent among theſe celebrated diſputants. And while an attachment to the ceremonial and ritual obſervances of the Church of Rome, and the moſt implicit ſubſerviency to

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its edicts, and the decrees of its councils, usurped the place of obedience to pure and practical Christianity; the bulky volumes of these schoolmen filled every library, and exercised the understanding of every student. And these were the speculations, which, however dry in point of style, and unimproving in point of matter, as they were patronized by the dignitaries of the church, and pursued by men of strong and vigorous minds, engrossed for centuries the whole attention of universities, interested courts, and were celebrated in every part of Europe.

In the mean time classical learning was entirely neglected; it was considered as dangerous to true piety, and calculated only to corrupt the pure theology of the Gospel. The poets and orators of Greece and Rome were regarded as the blind guides of erring reason, and as seducers to the paths of sin and destruction. Virgil and Horace were looked upon merely as the advocates for a profane and idolatrous mythology; and Cicero was regarded as a vain declaimer, impiously elated with the talent of Pagan eloquence. Whenever the minds of the monks were exercised in any literary compositions, to record the marvellous exploits of saints and

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martyrs, to compoſe unedifying homilies, and to make frivolous commentaries on Scripture, were the chief and favourite objects of their attention; and that ſuch were their occupations, the voluminous manuſcripts, which form the original parts of moſt of the oldeſt libraries in Europe, can abundantly teſtify.

We diſcover the firſt dawnings of modern literature in the cultivation of the language of Provence, and the rude productions of the Troubadours. The firſt of this order, whoſe name ſtands recorded, was William Count of Poitou, a nobleman, who diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his proweſs in the cruſades. Many of the men of rank, who embarked in the firſt expedition to the Holy Land, were of that number. Their Romances, compoſed upon the ſtriking ſubjects of gallantry, war, ſatire, and hiſtory, firſt awakened Europe from its ignorance and lethargy, amuſed the minds of men with groteſque and lively images and deſcriptions, and firſt taught them to think, reflect, and judge upon ſubjects of imagination. The Troubadours occupied the middle place between Gothic ignorance and Italian excellence; and after this period, literature is indebted to them for raiſing the earlieſt fruits of European genius, and inſpir-

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ing the moderns with a love of poetry. Their reputation and their language extended far and wide; and every country upon the continent of Europe could boaſt its itinerant bards. In the courts of kings, and the caſtles of barons, they were always hailed as the moſt welcome gueſts; and their exertions to pleaſe and to inſtruct were repaid by ſplendid rewards. The commencement of the cruſades, and the cloſe of the fourteenth century, mark the limits of their celebrity. The Romance, which had its riſe in the manners of chivalry, fell into diſrepute as ſoon as that inſtitution began to decline.

In the fourteenth century men of genius aroſe in Italy, who reſolved to cultivate their native tongue, and to combine with its elegance the charms of imagination, and the acquirements of claſſical learning. The poetry of the Tuſcan ſchool burſt forth with a ſplendour and luſtre, which have ever been ſurveyed with delight and admiration; and the works of Dante, Arioſto, Boccacio, and Petrarch, although the productions of an age ſo unpoliſhed, have never yet been excelled by four ſucceeding centuries of the beſt efforts of genius and learning.

After the philoſophy of Ariſtotle and the commentaries of the ſchoolmen had contributed for a conſiderable period to give a wrong direction to the faculties of the mind, and to occupy the time and attention of ſcholars; a ſeries of events occurred in the fifteenth century, which turned the minds of ingenious men to new reſearches, opened the way to the revival of claſſical learning, and the improvement of all the arts and ſciences connected with its cultivation.

The ſubverſion of the Roman empire in the Eaſt, and the diſcovery of the art of printing, happened nearly at the ſame period of time. Learned men had long trembled at the approach, and at length fled before the fierce aſpect of Mahomet the ſecond. After Conſtantinople was taken by the Turks in the year 1453, Chryſoloras, Demetrius Chalcondyles, Johannes Andronicus, Calliſtus Conſtantius, Johannes Laſcaris, Gaza of Theſſalonica, and many other learned Greeks, whoſe names muſt ever be recorded with honour in the annals of literature, fled into Italy for ſhelter and protection [t]. This country, in conſequence of having al-

[t] For an able vindication of theſe eminent ſcholars from various miſrepreſentations, ſee Forſter's Eſſay on Accent and

ways preſerved a greater degree of refinement and knowledge than the reſt of Europe, was happily calculated for their favourable reception. They found in particular at Florence ſeveral Greek profeſſors, who had been induced, by the liberality of Coſmo de Medici, a great patron of learning, to ſettle in that city. Into Italy they conveyed, and there they interpreted, the ineſtimable works of their ancient writers, which had been preſerved in the metropolis of the Eaſt. They were eagerly followed by the beſt Italian ſcholars, who quickly imbibed a taſte for the graces of genuine poetry, eloquence, and hiſtory. A more elegant and ſublime philoſophy was ſoon adopted; and the ſcholaſtic ſubtleties of logic, and the empty ſpeculations of metaphyſics, were gradually ſuperſeded by the uſeful principles of moral philoſophy, the maxims of ſound criticiſm, and the acquiſitions of elegant learning.

and Quantity, p. 215. For an account of their lives, ſee Hodius de Græcis Illuſtribus, and Boernerus de doctis Hominibus Græcis. There is ſcarcely a greater deſideratum in the learned world, than a complete hiſtory of the revival of learning;—but where is the Gibbon, or the Robertſon, who is equal to ſo arduous, ſo noble a taſk? and where is the Mæcenas, who will encourage it? *Exoriare aliquis!*

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The patronage of the Popes gave the greateſt ſplendour and importance to this new kind of erudition. Conſidering its encouragement as an excellent expedient to eſtabliſh their authority, ſuch was their liberality to ſcholars, that the court of Rome on a ſudden changed its auſtere character, and became the ſeat of elegance and urbanity. Nicholas the fifth, about the year 1440, offered public rewards at Rome for compoſitions in the learned languages, appointed profeſſors in the Belles Lettres, and employed intelligent perſons to traverſe all parts of Europe in ſearch of the claſſic manuſcripts, which were concealed in the libraries of monaſteries. Leo the tenth was not leſs conſpicuous for his ardour and his munificence in this noble cauſe. It is very remarkable, that while he was pouring the thunder of his anathemas againſt the heretical doctrines of Luther, he publiſhed a bull of excommunication againſt all thoſe who ſhould dare to cenſure the poems of Arioſto. And it was during his pontificate, that a perpetual indulgence was granted for rebuilding the church of a monaſtery, becauſe it poſſeſſed a manuſcript of Tacitus. In the exerciſe of theſe new ſtudies, the Italian eccleſiaſtics were the firſt and the moſt numerous. Countenanced

by the authority of the ſovereign pontiff, they abandoned the intricacies of a dry and barbarous theology, and cultivated the pureſt models of antiquity.

No ſooner had Italy, under theſe auſpices, baniſhed the Gothic ſtyle in eloquence and poetry, than painting, ſculpture, and architecture arrived at maturity, and ſhone in all their original ſplendour. The beautiful and ſublime ideas, which the Italian artiſts had conceived from the contemplation of ancient ſtatues and temples, were invigorated by the deſcriptions of Homer and Sophocles. Petrarch was crowned at Rome in the capitol, and Raphael was promoted to the dignity of a cardinal.

Theſe improvements were ſoon received in other countries, and ſpread their influence over France, England, Spain, and Hungary. To Germany likewiſe muſt be allowed a very large and diſtinguiſhed ſhare in the reſtitution of letters. And the mechanical genius of Holland added, at an auſpicious moment to all the fortunate events in favour of ſcience, an admirable invention; for to that country the world is indebted for the diſcovery of the art of printing, and to Germany

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for its improvement. The honour of having given rise to this art has been claimed by the cities of Haerlem, Mentz, and Strasburg. To each of these it may be attributed in a qualified sense, as within a short space of time they respectively contributed to its advancement. But the original inventor was Laurentius John Coster of Haerlem, who made his first essay with wooden types about the year 1430. The art was communicated by his servant to John Faust and John Guttemburg of Mentz. It was carried to perfection by Peter Schoeffer, the son-in-law of Faustus, who invented the modes of casting metal types, and was probably the first who used them in printing[u]. The most popular of

[u] Trithemius, in his Chronicle, written A. D. 1514, says he had it from the mouth of Peter Schoeffer, that the first book they printed with moveable types was the Bible, about the year 1450, in which the expences were so enormous as to have cost 4000 florins before they had printed 12 sheets. The author of a MS. Chronicle of Cologne, compiled in 1499, also says, that he was told by Ulric Zell of Cologne, (who himself introduced printing there in 1466) that the Latin Bible was first begun to be printed in the year of Jubilee 1450, and that it was in large character. *Scriptura grandiori quali hodie missalia solent imprimi.* Mr. Edwards of Pall Mall possessed a copy of this curious Bible, 3 vol. bound in Morocco. In his catalogue it was valued at 126l.

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theſe very ingenious mechanics was Fauſt, who is reported to have carried a number of his Bibles to Paris; and when he offered them to ſale as manuſcripts, the French, conſidering the number of the books, and their exact reſemblance to each other, without the variation even of a letter or a ſtop, and that the beſt tranſcribers could not poſſibly be ſo exact in their moſt accurate copies, concluded he muſt have derived aſſiſtance from ſome ſupernatural agent. Either by actually proſecuting him as a conjuror, or threatening to do ſo, they extorted from him the curious ſecret of his new invention; and it is probable, that from this circumſtance aroſe the marvellous ſtories which are related of Dr. Fauſtus.

The art of printing was ſoon ſpread throughout a great part of Europe. It paſſed to Rome in 1466, and the Roman type was in a ſhort time brought to great perfection. Thomas Bourchier, Archbiſhop of Canterbury, in the reign of Henry VI. ſent Caxton, a perſon remarkable in that age for cultivating learning amid the occupations of commerce, to Haerlem, to gain a knowledge of this invention; and "the firſt book which Caxton printed was an Engliſh tranſlation of

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Recuyel, or the Hiſtory of Troy in 1471, in Flanders. The firſt book known to have been printed in England by him was a tranſlation from the French *of the Game of Cheſs*, 1474, with fuſil metal types. For though Frederick Corſelli, a Dutchman or German, is ſaid to have printed at Oxford in 1468, *Sancti Hieronymi Expoſitio in Symbolum Apoſtolorum*, it has been doubted whether there ever was a printer of that name in England; and if there was, his book was printed with ſeparate *wooden types* [x]." At the cloſe of the ſixteenth century, various editions of books in Syriac, Arabic, Perſian, Armenian, and Coptic characters were publiſhed. This admirable diſcovery was made at a period the moſt favourable to its reception and improvement. Not only a taſte for polite learning began, as we have before remarked, to be faſhionable in the fifteenth century, but many perſons of the firſt rank in ſeveral parts of Europe, and particularly in Italy, diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their love of letters, and their patronage of eminent ſcholars. Many public libraries were about this time erected in the great cities of Europe, and were furniſhed with manuſcripts of ancient authors, purchaſed at a great expence; but from the care, with which they were guarded, their

[x] See the Norfolk Tour, p. 120.

perusal was confined to a small number of readers. No invention therefore could be more fortunate, or more likely to gratify the general curiosity, than that by which copies of the same work were easily and expeditiously multiplied, sold at a reasonable rate, and circulated throughout every part of the world.

This art would have been comparatively of small value a century or two before, when the grossest ignorance prevailed, and even persons of high birth and distinction were extremely illiterate, and of course not disposed to give encouragement to the revival of learning. On the contrary, the people of the fifteenth century were highly gratified by the discovery of an art so congenial to their taste, and therefore stimulated the ingenuity of its inventors to carry it to a high degree of perfection. Of this encouragement and improvement sufficient proofs are now extant; for many of the books, which were printed at this early period, may be compared, with respect to the blackness of the ink, the elegance of the type, and the excellence of the paper, to most of the copies, which are at this time the boast of the English or foreign presses.

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Thus, as books were multiplied, a taſte for reading became more general. And it is very remarkable, that the reformation of religion and the revival of claſſical learning were reciprocally advantageous; they reflected mutual light, and afforded mutual aſſiſtance to each other. The eccleſiaſtics, when books were placed within the common reach, could no longer confine the languages nor the writers of antiquity to themſelves; and men were eager to acquire that knowledge, which had been ſo long concealed. They imagined the mines of antiquity to be very rich; and they were not diſappointed; for as ſoon as they were enabled to explore their treaſures, they found them anſwer their moſt ſanguine expectations [x].

As the dawn of the Reformation in England was obſcured by the bigotry of the ſanguinary Mary, ſo were there few circumſtances in her fanatical reign, that were propitious to the growth of polite erudition. It is however a pleaſing circumſtance to be able to ſelect from the calamitous hiſtory of ſuch times an event, which was the auſpicious omen of the future diffuſion of claſſical knowledge, and which does honour to the founder of a

[y] Warton's Engliſh Poetry, vol. iii. p. 491. vol. ii. p. 454, &c.

ſociety, which among the ſtateſmen, poets, and ſcholars, enrolled in its liſts, records the names of SOMERS, CHATHAM, MERRICK, WARTON, BENWELL, and BOWLES. In the year 1554, Sir Thomas Pope founded *Trinity College in Oxford*; in the conſtitution of which, he principally inculcates the uſe and neceſſity of claſſical literature: and recommends it as the moſt important and leading object in that ſyſtem of academical ſtudy, which he preſcribes to the youth of the new ſociety. " He eſtabliſhes in this ſeminary a teacher of humanity, whoſe buſineſs is deſcribed with a particularity not uſual in the conſtitutions given to collegiate bodies of this kind; and he is directed to exert his utmoſt diligence in tincturing his auditors with a juſt reliſh for the graces and purity of the Latin language, and to explain critically the Offices, de Oratore, and Rhetorical Treaties of Cicero, the Inſtitutes of Quintilian, Aulus Gellius, Plautus, Terence, Virgil, Horace, Livy, &c. In his prefatory ſtatute, where he deſcribes the nature and deſign of his foundation, he declares, that he deſtines the younger part of his eſtabliſhment not only to dialectics and philoſophy, but to the more polite literature. The ſtatutes of this college were ſubmitted to the inſpection of Cardinal Pole, one of the chief protectors of the revival of polite

polite letters in England, as appears from a curious paſſage in a letter written by the founder now remaining, which not only diſplays the Cardinal's ideas of the new erudition, but ſhews the ſtate of the Greek language at this period."—" Queen Mary was herſelf eminently learned: at the deſire of Queen Catharine Parr, ſhe tranſlated in her youth Eraſmus's Paraphraſe on St. John; the preface is written by Udall, maſter of Eaton School; in which he much extols her diſtinguiſhed proficience in literature. It would have been fortunate, if Mary's attention to this work had ſoftened her temper, and enlightened her underſtanding. She frequently ſpoke in public with propriety, and always with prudence and dignity[y]."

In the ſubſequent reign of Elizabeth, an accurate acquaintance with the phraſes, and all the peculiarities of the ancient poets, hiſtorians, and orators, was made an indiſpenſable and almoſt the principal object in the education, not only of a gentleman, but even of a lady. Among the females of high diſ-

[y] Warton's Engliſh Poetry, vol. ii. p. 454, &c. I am aware that attention was paid ſome years before to frivolous ſyſtems of grammar and rhetoric in both univerſities; but I know of no college ſtatutes of ſo early a date, in which the ſtudy of the claſſics is ſo much inſiſted upon.

tinction, who aspired to the reputation of classical scholars, the Queen herself, and the beautiful and unfortunate Lady Jane Grey, were the most conspicuous. Roger Ascham, their learned preceptor, speaks in raptures of the progress, which they both made in the Greek authors, and relates some pleasing anecdotes of their application to this study [z]. This pedantic fashion appeared in many ludicrous extravagancies. It was conspicuous in various publications, in the shows and pageants exhibited during the progress of the Queen through different parts of her dominions, and in the entertainments held in her honour, wherein emblems allusive to classical mythology were constantly introduced.

But the pedantry, which gave so deep a tinge to the fashion of those times, had little effect upon the productions of Shakespeare. Raised by the power of original and daring genius, he bent the learning of former ages to his own purposes. His works, like those of Milton, were for a time neglected: but since the close of the seventeenth century, they have been held in the highest estimation, and have contributed, perhaps more than any others of our national compositions, to diffuse

[z] Ascham, Epist. lib. i. p. 18. Edit. 1581, &c.

a relish

a relish for books. That relish was first excited by the numerous translations of the Greek and Roman authors, and of Italian tales into English, in the reign of Elizabeth. The works of the writers, who flourished in the time of Queen Anne, particularly Addison, Swift, and Dryden, divested learning of its stiffness, revived a just taste for the classics, and had great influence in making the perusal of books a popular amusement. Since that period, we may fairly be called a nation of readers. Books of all kinds have been produced, and the press has supplied the means of multiplying them to a degree, which exceeds the power of calculation. We well know, and lament, that it is subject to great abuse, and is too frequently made the instrument for the propagation of insignificant, licentious, and frequently of the most pernicious works, destructive to morals, and hostile to religion. It has perhaps done more mischief by the diffusion of the principles of anarchy and atheism in the present age, than the sword or the cannon: but, happily for mankind, the antidote grows in the same soil, where the poison springs up in such luxuriance. Let us consider what the press has effected, and what it may still produce for the advantage, the instruction, and delight of mankind.

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Its benefits are as extenſive as they are various; it is of the higheſt importance to us, as we are Engliſhmen, and as we are Chriſtians. It is the ſafeguard of liberty, when it is uſed to protect our excellent conſtitution againſt the cabals of party, and the attacks of democratic rage. It is the ally of religion, when it ſupplies the world with the productions of the learned and the pious; who labour to diſſeminate the precepts of genuine Chriſtianity. It furniſhes the means of rational improvement, and amuſement in the hours of ſickneſs and leiſure. It communicates inſtruction to the young, and entertainment to the old, and ſpreads theſe enjoyments far and wide, before every people of the globe. We have therefore ſufficient reaſon to congratulate ourſelves, on being born at a time, in which we are reſcued from the groſs ignorance which enveloped our anceſtors; when the light of pure religion and uſeful knowledge is diffuſed around us; and when, provided that our moral improvements keep pace, in a due degree, with our intellectual proficiency, we may be virtuous, as well as enlightened and intelligent, beyond the example of former ages.

Such

Conclusion.

Such are ſome of the moſt ſtriking points, upon which the ſtudent will fix his eye, in his wide and pleaſing ſurvey of modern hiſtory. There are many others which are entitled to his obſervation; and he cannot fail to notice with particular regard the æra marked by the invention of the mariner's compaſs, and all the conſequent improvements in navigation. From that period, the ſailor, aſſuming the more enterpriſing character of the navigator, became more confident and more adventurous; he ſcorned to coaſt along the ſhore, and boldly ſteered his veſſel into the wide and open ocean. He diſcovered new iſlands, and even new continents, eſtabliſhed a free intercourſe with the moſt remote quarters of the globe, imparted to diſtant nations the advantages of commerce, and pointed out to the Europeans a boundleſs ſcope for the plantation of colonies in Aſia, Africa, and America.

In tracing the progreſs of navigation, from the confined limits of the Mediterranean and the Baltic ſhores, to its preſent extent in the northern and ſouthern hemiſpheres, we obſerve upon the map of the globe the tracks of

of thoſe renowned navigators, Chriſtopher Columbus, Vaſco de Gama, and Sebaſtian Cabot; and we follow with a more lively curioſity, and national pride, the courſes of Drake, Raleigh, Anſon, Byron, Carteret, and Cooke.

The diſcovery of gunpowder is remarkable, as its introduction into the military art has changed the mode of waging war, and leſſened its deſtructive ravages. The invention of the teleſcope was an important acquiſition to ſcience, as it has ſerved to verify the theories and eſtabliſh the reaſonings of modern aſtronomers, and thus gives them a decided advantage over thoſe, who in ancient times cultivated the ſame ſcience. The invention likewiſe of the air-pump by Boyle, the diſcovery of the circulation of the blood by Harvey, the eſtabliſhment of the Copernican ſyſtem, the experiment of Torricelli, by which he aſcertained the weight of the atmoſphere, and the numerous improvements in various arts and ſciences, contribute to do honour to modern times. They compoſe ſuch an aſſemblage of luminous objects, as cannot fail to attract for all ages the curioſity and admiration of mankind.

Theſe pleaſing branches of ſtudy may lead

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us to form a juſt eſtimate of political affairs, and of the ſubjects which tend to the moral improvement of the mind. This hiſtory affords many examples of the prowefs of conquerors, who have deſolated the world, and of hypocrites, who have deceived it. And yet we may fairly aſk, of what benefit to ſociety were the impoſtures of Mahomet, the victories of Clovis, Charlemagne, Gengis Khan, and Tamerlane; the invaſion of William the Conqueror, the political cunning of Charles the fifth, the ambition of Philip the ſecond, and the intriguing ſpirit of Richelieu and Mazarine? Their empires, triumphs, conqueſts, and projects have left little impreſſion behind them, notwithſtanding the attention they once attracted, and the violent convulſions, which they once made in the world. The mind is refreſhed, and turns with delight to more pacific ſcenes, to trace the diſcoveries of Columbus and Vaſco de Gama, and the beneficial change in religious opinions, which Luther and Calvin produced. We conſider with more ſatisfaction than the recital of battles and ſieges can afford, the mild and benevolent ſpirit of colonization, which actuated the exertions of William Penn; the ſublime philoſophy of Bacon, Newton, and Locke; and the matchleſs poe-

try of Shakeſpeare, Milton, and Taſſo. Theſe have a more beneficial influence in enlarging our knowledge, and ſatisfying our curioſity, than the moſt intimate acquaintance with the conqueſts of the ambitious, and the machinations of the politic. The works of war and heroiſm are too often deſtructive in their operations, and diſaſtrous in their conſequences; and the cloſer they are examined, the more they wound our feelings, by the calamities they have produced. They may furniſh indeed very inſtructive leſſons of caution, if the rulers of mankind imitate the conduct of prudent mariners, who remark the ſituation of rocks and ſhoals, only from a deſign to avoid them. How much fairer and more inviting is the proſpect of the works of genius, ſcience, arts, and commerce! They charm our attention the longer they are ſurveyed; and the more intimately we are acquainted with them, the greater is our pleaſure, as well as our improvement.

Thus have we ſeen that the arts and ſciences have kept pace with the progreſs of manners and religion, in adorning and exalting the human mind; and thus have their united light diſpelled the ſhades of ignorance and barbariſm. The intellectual powers, after

ter ages of depreſſion, have ſurmounted all obſtacles, and have operated through every channel of knowledge; and perhaps it is not arrogating too much ſuperiority to aſſert, that the glory even of ancient Greece and Rome has been equalled, if not ſurpaſſed, by the talents and diligence of modern Europeans, in the cultivation of whatever can inſtruct and improve ſociety.

This intereſting part of hiſtory diſplays to us a variety of diſcoveries, events, improvements, and inſtitutions, which have contributed, in their aggregate effects, to raiſe the character of man above its former level, to encourage induſtry, and diverſify its purſuits; to call forth the powers of the mind to every laudable exertion, to cheriſh all the virtue of the heart, and make human exiſtence more valuable, by increaſing the general ſtock of moral and intellectual improvement, and promoting ſocial order, comfort, and happineſs.

CHAPTER XI.

The Hiſtory of England.

THE advantages, which reſult from an acquaintance with the hiſtory of our own country, are too obvious to require many previous obſervations. Such knowledge is of the greateſt importance to all thoſe who take an active part in the public ſervice, either as officers of the army or navy, magiſtrates, or members of parliament. And to perſons of all other deſcriptions it is equally agreeable, if not equally neceſſary; becauſe, as every Engliſhman finds a peculiar gratification in deciding upon the propriety of political meaſures, and eſtimating the merits of thoſe who direct the helm of government; he cannot form correct opinions, by adverting to the plans which have for ages been purſued, as conducive to the beſt intereſts of the nation, or by contemplating the cauſes of national diſgrace or glory, if he neglects to lay the foundation, upon which ſuch correct opinions can alone be built.

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The love of our country naturally awakens in us a ſpirit of curioſity to inquire into the conduct of our anceſtors, and to learn the memorable events of their hiſtory: and this is certainly a far more urgent motive, than any which uſually prompts us to the purſuit of other hiſtorical reſearches. Nothing that happened to our forefathers can be a matter of indifference to us. It is natural to indulge the mixed emotions of veneration and eſteem for them; and our regard is not founded upon blind partiality, but reſults from the moſt ſteady and rational attachment. We are their deſcendants, we reap the fruits of their public and private labours, and we not only ſhare the inheritance of their property, but derive reputation from their noble actions. A Ruſſian or a Turk may have a ſtrong predilection for his country, and entertain a profound veneration for his anceſtors: but, deſtitute as he finds himſelf of an equal ſhare of the bleſſings which reſult from ſecurity, liberty, and impartial laws, he can never feel the ſame generous and pure patriotiſm, which glows in the breaſt of a Briton.

" If an Engliſhman, ſaid the great Frederic of Pruſſia, has no knowledge of thoſe kings

that filled the throne of Persia; if his memory is embarrassed with that infinite number of popes that ruled the church, we are ready to excuse him: but we shall hardly have the same indulgence for him, if he is a stranger to the origin of parliaments, to the customs of his country, and to the different lines of kings who have reigned in England[a]."

In the eventful pages of her history, England presents some of the most interesting scenes that the annals of the world can produce. In this country liberty has maintained frequent and bloody conflicts with despotism; sometimes she has sunk oppressed under the chains of tyrants, and sometimes reared her head in triumph. Here one King brought, in defiance of all justice, to the scaffold, and another compelled by the voice of his injured people to abdicate his throne, have given awful lessons to the world. Here Sovereigns and subjects, after engaging in the warmest opposition of interests, have made mutual concessions; and the prerogative of the one, and the privileges of the other, have been fixed upon the solid basis of the general good. In the midst of civil commotions, as

[a] Memoirs of the House of Brandenburg.

well

well as in the intervals of tranquillity, Science, Genius, and Arts have flouriſhed, and advanced the national character above that of the neighbouring ſtates. For this is the country of men deſervedly renowned for their talents, learning, and diſcoveries in the various branches of art and ſcience; to whom future generations will bow with reſpect and veneration, as to their guides and inſtructors. In this iſland Shakeſpeare and Milton diſplayed their vaſt powers of original genius, Locke developed the faculties of the mind, and Newton explained and illuſtrated the laws of nature. Here were trained thoſe adventurous Navigators, who have conveyed the Britiſh flag to the extremities of the globe, added new dominions to their native land, extended the range of nautical ſcience, and ſpread the bleſſings of civilization among the moſt remote people. Here mankind at large may contemplate a CONSTITUTION, which is propitious to the higheſt advancement of the moral and intellectual powers of man, which ſecures perſonal ſafety, maintains perſonal dignity, and combines the public and private advantages of all other governments.

This conſtitution, which has ſo powerful and ſo happy an influence upon the character,

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ſentiments, and proſperity of the Britiſh nation, aroſe from the conflict of diſcordant intereſts, and was meliorated by the wiſdom of the moſt ſagacious and enlightened legiſlators.

Reſerving a more exact inquiry into the regular train of events for future ſtudies, let us at preſent confine our attention to a ſhort view of thoſe memorable reigns, during which the *principles* of the preſent conſtitution were developed, and thoſe *laws* were enacted which form its ſupport.

From the vaſt and gloomy foreſts of Germany, Hengiſt and Horſa, attended by their warlike followers, brought into Britain new arts of war, and new inſtitutions of civil polity [b]. From the obvious tendency of the Saxon inſtitutions to eſtabliſh public order and private comfort, they found a welcome reception among ſuch Britons as were timid and docile; while thoſe who were of a ferocious temper, and ſpurned the tyranny of foreign power, fled to the inacceſſible mountains of Wales, and there enjoyed their original independence.

[b] A. D. 450.

As

As far as we are able to discern the imperfect traces of Saxon customs and establishments, by the dim light of Roman and English history, we are struck with their mildness, equity, and wisdom. The descent of the crown was hereditary, the subordinate magistrates were elected by the people, capital punishments were rarely inflicted for the first offence, and their lands were bequeathed equally to all the sons, without any regard to primogeniture. In the venerable assembly of the Wittena-gemote, consisting of the most honourable and intelligent men in the kingdom, all business for the service of the public was transacted, and all laws were passed. For the origin of this assembly, we must have recourse to remote antiquity; as similar meetings, constituted indeed in a rude and imperfect manner, were convened among the ancient Germans from the earliest times [c].

ALFRED, surnamed the Great, derived that illustrious title from the exercise of every

[c] For the mode, in which the Wittena-gemote was constituted, see Brady's Introduction to the History of England. For an account of the ancient Germans, the reader is referred to Hume, vol. i. p. 198; Modern Europe, vol. i. p. 58; Tacitus de Moribus Germanorum, c. 7; and Mallet's Northern Antiquities, p. 224.

quality, which adorned the ſcholar, the warrior, the patriot, and the legiſlator. After chaſing the Daniſh plunderers from his ſhores, he directed his attention to the internal regulation of his kingdom[d]. He digeſted the diſcordant laws of the heptarchy into one conſiſtent code, adopted a uniform plan of government, and made every one of his ſubjects, without regard to rank or fortune, reſponſible to his immediate ſuperior for his own conduct, and that of his neighbour. For the ſpeedy deciſion of all civil and criminal cauſes, he eſtabliſhed courts of juſtice in the various diſtricts, in which complaints aroſe. Of all his inſtitutions, the moſt remarkable and the moſt celebrated was the Trial by Jury. Too much praiſe cannot be beſtowed upon him for exempting his accuſed ſubjects from the arbitrary ſentence of a judge, and leaving the determination of their guilt or innocence to a council of their equals, too numerous to be influenced by mercenary motives, and whoſe unanimity could admit no doubts as to the juſtice of their deciſions[e].

[d] A. D. 872.

[e] The detail of his eventful and glorious reign is written with peculiar ſpirit and elegance by Hume, vol. i. p. 76.

The precipitate conduct of Harold, in risking his crown upon the issue of a single battle, gave to William of Normandy the kingdom of England [f]. The Conqueror overturned at once the whole fabric of the Saxon laws, and erected the feudal system upon its ruins.

A proper acquaintance with this extraordinary institution, which was at that time common in all the countries upon the continent of Europe, conduces materially to illustrate the history of those times, and to explain the ancient tenure of landed property. For a particular account of it we refer to the history of modern Europe [g].

The first of the Norman tyrants not only broke the line of hereditary succession to the crown of England, but reduced the people to the most abject slavery. The confiscations of the Saxon estates, and the general distress of their proprietors, plainly indicated his policy and rapacity. All the estates of the Britons were either seized for the king, or given to his favourites; large tracts formerly cultivated by the industrious Saxons were abandoned to the original wildness of nature; and even

[f] A. D. 1066. [g] See page 448, &c.

whole

whole counties were converted into forests and wastes, to afford an unbounded scope to his passion for the chase. The severity of the forest laws sufficiently marks the selfishness of his diversions, and the cruelty of his temper. The life of an animal was valued at a higher rate than that of a man; and his uncontrolled and destructive ambition was extended to the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field.

With the Norman language, which was adopted in the services of the Church, as well as in the courts of justice, were introduced the Norman laws. The ancient Trial by Jury was exchanged for the uncertain and unjust decision by single combat. The extinction of all fires at the melancholy sound of the Curfew was a lively emblem of the extinction of liberty. The nation groaned under every distress that an obdurate and politic conqueror could inflict; and their chains were so firmly rivetted, as to require a degree of energy and unanimity to break them, which the timid and oppressed Saxons had not sufficient resolution to exert.

In the following reigns of the Norman tyrants the same oppression was endured with

little alleviation. The people ſtill continued to have no reſource againſt the execution of the moſt ſanguinary laws. The exorbitant power of the king, and its frequent abuſes, at length rouſed a ſpirit of oppoſition, which was at once determined and irreſiſtible. But as his feudal demeſnes were large, and his influence extended over a great number of vaſſals, they did not think themſelves ſufficiently formidable to oppoſe his authority, without ſecuring the co-operation of the other poſſeſſors of land. They therefore held out to the commons the moſt advantageous inducements, by promiſing to ſtipulate with the king for a redreſs of all public grievances, and an augmentation of their common privileges.

In Runny Mead the great foundation of Engliſh liberty was laid[h]. There the reluctant and perfidious John, after having repeatedly diſregarded their former ſolicitations, was compelled to ſign MAGNA CHARTA, and the CHARTA OF THE FOREST[i]. The arm of

[h] A.D. 1215. Carte, vol. i. p. 831.

[i] He murdered his nephew Arthur with his own hands. See Carte, vol. i. p. 796. I have heard Mr. Tho. Warton ſay—"You may read Hume for his elegance; but Carte is the hiſtorian for facts." My careful peruſal of his elabo-

force and terror, which his triumphant barons held over his head, was ſtrengthened by the claims of juſtice. It is true indeed, that as they held their eſtates by the feudal tenure, they were obliged to ſubmit to the conditions it impoſed, and to obey the mandates of an arbitrary chieftain. But as all the kings from the conqueſt had ſworn at their coronation to revive the laws of Edward the Confeſſor, and had uniformly violated their engagements, the barons conceived themſelves juſtifiable, when their partizans and adherents were ſufficiently ſtrong and numerous, in demanding from John, by the power of the ſword, the full execution of his promiſe.

The abject and ſervile ſtate of the people previous to this auſpicious event is ſufficiently evident, from conſidering the immunities granted by Magna Charta, and the Charter of the Foreſt. The barons vindicated more of their rights than merely conſiſted in the abolition of their own hardſhips and griev-

elaborate work has fully confirmed the truth of this obſervation: and I think him an hiſtorian particularly well adapted to the preſent times of political novelties; as he is an intelligent and zealous advocate for the rights of kings, as well as ſubjects; and maintains upon all occaſions the honour and dignity of the Church of England.

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ances. Firm in their engagements to the commons, who enlisted under their banners, they obtained for them the participation of many of their own privileges. They were equally exempted from unreasonable fines, or illegal distresses, for service due to the crown; and acquired the privilege of disposing of their property by will. The provisions of Magna Charta enjoined an uniformity of weights and measures, gave new encouragements to commerce, by the protection of foreign merchants; prohibited all delay in the administration of justice; established annual circuits of judges; confirmed the liberties of all cities and districts; and protected every freeholder in the full enjoyment of his life, liberty, and property; unless they were pronounced by his peers to be forfeited to the laws of his country[k].

[k] "Nullus liber homo capiatur, vel imprisonetur, vel disseisietur de libero tenemento suo, vel libertatibus, vel liberis consuetudinibus suis; aut utlagetur, aut exulet, aut aliquo modo destruetur. Nec super eum ibimus, nec super eum mittemus, nisi per legale judicium parium suorum, vel per legem terræ. Nulli vendemus, nulli negabimus, aut differemus judicium, vel rectum." Magna Charta, cap. 29.

"This article is so important, that it may be said to comprehend the whole end and design of political societies; and from that moment the English would have been a free people, if there were not an immense difference between

the

Thus was the firſt general oppoſition ſucceſsfully made againſt arbitrary power; and thoſe rights were vindicated, which the ancient inhabitants of the iſland had enjoyed. As Magna Charta was granted under circumſtances of great ſolemnity, and afterwards ratified at the beginning of every ſubſequent reign, it was a ſacred hoſtage depoſited in the hands of the people, for the equitable government of their kings. Unlike the traditional maxims of tyrannical power, to which any colour of interpretation could be given, which might ſuit the caprice, the folly, or the neceſſity of abſolute monarchs, this celebrated Charter was a public and conſpicuous ſtipulation, to which immediate appeal might be made to determine the right of the commoners to a redreſs of grievances, and the free adminiſtration of juſtice. It was the root, from which ſalutary laws gradually branched out, as the ſtate of ſociety became more civiliſed and enlightened, for the protection and ſecurity not only of the proprietors of land and of merchants, who, it is to be remarked, were its ſole objects, but of perſons of every rank and degree in the kingdom.

the making of laws, and the obſerving of them." De Lolme on the Conſtitution, p. 28.

In the reign of Henry the third, which although it was of longer continuance than that of any other monarch, who has ever ſwayed the Engliſh ſceptre, and was remarkable for vexatious conflicts between the haughty barons and a capricious king, we may diſcover ſome of the earlieſt traces of a repreſentative legiſlature. The captive monarch, intimidated by the ſword of the imperious Simon Montfort Earl of Leiceſter, iſſued orders for every county to depute perſons to aſſiſt him and his nobles in their deliberations on ſtate affairs. Thus to the diſtractions and troubles of theſe diſaſtrous times, England is indebted for the repreſentatives of the people being firſt called to parliament.

" There are ſtill preſerved in the tower of London ſome writs iſſued, during this reign, for the choice of two knights in each ſhire, to repreſent their county in parliament; but this repreſentation was not yet grown to a ſettled cuſtom: and though there are no ſummons to either Lords or Commons, nor any rolls of this particular parliament as yet diſcovered in any of our repoſitories of records; yet by other accounts given thereof, theſe leſſer barons, knights and military tenants holding immediately of the crown, ſeem

ſeem to have been ſummoned, according to John's Magna Charta, by a general proclamation, to appear not by any repreſentation, but in their own perſons."

The more regular eſtabliſhment of the Houſe of Commons may however be referred to the ſucceeding reign of Edward the firſt[1]. Strongly actuated by the martial ſpirit of his age, he engaged in long and expenſive wars againſt Wales and Scotland, in conſequence of which his treaſury was exhauſted, and his only reſource for regular ſupplies was found in the contributions of his ſubjects. But as the mode purſued by his predeceſſors of filling their coffers had been both odious, and in a great degree inefficient, he deviſed a method of obtaining by their own conſent what had formerly been wreſted by the arbitrary mandate of the king. With this view, the ſheriffs of the different counties were commanded to invite the towns and boroughs to ſend deputies to parliament, to provide for his pecuniary wants, and to ratify the reſolutions made by himſelf and the Houſe of Lords. He likewiſe annexed an important

[1] A. D. 1265. Anno 18. Edw. I. See Brady's Introduction for a copy of one of the Writs, p. 149. Carte, vol. ii. p. 151.

article

article to Magna Charta, by which he bound himſelf and his ſucceſſors not to raiſe any ſubſidies whatever, without the approbation of both Lords and Commons. Several excellent laws for the eaſe and benefit of all ranks of his ſubjects were paſſed in this "general parliament," which gave infinite ſatisfaction to the whole body of the nation, and gained Edward the entire affections of his people[m].

From the praiſe, which many writers give to this great monarch, ſome ſhare muſt be deducted on account of the neceſſities, to which he expoſed himſelf by his frequent wars. The proviſions of Magna Charta had doubtleſs been very conducive to the extent of freedom: but we find, that with whatever veneration the People might regard them, they had been conſtantly violated, whenever the immediate predeceſſors of Edward the firſt were powerful enough to break their promiſes. A Houſe compoſed of the repreſentatives of the people was the only bulwark of ſufficient ſtrength to check the torrent of deſpotiſm; and the importunity of the Commons for more liberty, and of the King for pecuniary aid, failed not to produce

[m] A.D. 1275. Carte, vol. ii. p. 182.

ſuch gradual conceſſions from both parties, as contributed to fix in ſucceeding times an equal balance of power.

The character of EDWARD THE FIRST was not only marked by the bravery of a warrior, but the more uſeful and profound talents of a legiſlator. He ratified both the charters, and obſerved their conditions with a ſcrupulous exactneſs, which formed the diſtinguiſhed glory of his reign. He afforded a free and extenſive ſcope to the exerciſe of the ſtatutes of the realm, ſurrendered a part of his right of ſending mandates to arreſt the progreſs of juſtice; and, as a deciſive proof of his reſpect for the laws, and his alacrity to promote their impartial adminiſtration, he cauſed his ſon the Prince of Wales to be publicly apprehended and impriſoned, for breaking down the fences and killing the deer of Walter de Langton, Biſhop of Litchfield and Coventry[n].

It is natural enough to conclude, that as at this period the members of both houſes of parliament held their deliberations under the authority of a wiſe and moderate ſovereign, they would make the great intereſt of the nation at large the ſubjects of their debates,

[n] A.D. 1305. Rapin, vol. i. p. 383. fol.

and

and thus improve the ſcience of legiſlation. Accordingly we find that they gave their attention to many plans of great public utility; they paſſed the celebrated law for defining the crime of treaſon, for eſtabliſhing manufactures in various parts of England, for ſupporting the parochial clergy by the endowment of vicarages, and for reſtraining the encroachments and the rapacity of the ſee of Rome. Every ſucceeding generation has expreſſed its applauſe of this illuſtrious reign, and felt the benefits of its wiſe and ſalutary inſtitutions. By Edward the firſt the laws were carried ſo far towards perfection, that he has been ſtyled the Engliſh Juſtinian. Sir Matthew Hale did not ſcruple to affirm, that more was done in the firſt thirteen years of his government, to ſettle and eſtabliſh the diſtributive juſtice of the kingdom, than in all the ages down to his own time [o].

To trace the progreſs of the increaſing privileges of the Houſe of Commons, we muſt have recourſe to particular facts. In a tone of bold and juſt complaint the two houſes of parliament called upon the weak and unfortunate Edward the ſecond to baniſh

[o] Blackſtone's Comment. vol. iv. p. 424.

 Gaveſton,

Gaveston, his insinuating but licentious favourite, from his court. This was the first exercise of that important privilege, which consisted in the impeachment of the suspected ministers of the crown. By the petition annexed to their bills for granting subsidies to Edward the third, and Henry the fourth, the House of Commons claimed a proportionable share of the legislation with the King and the House of Lords, by making bills for pecuniary supplies originate with themselves.

In the martial reign of EDWARD THE THIRD, the parliament is supposed to have assumed its present form, by a separation of the Commons from the Lords. The celebrated statute for defining treasons was one of the first productions of this newly modelled assembly. Many laws were passed for depressing the civil power of the pope, the security of personal property, and the interests of trade and commerce. During this reign Magna Charta was ten times confirmed; and this repeated ratification conferred more glory upon the king, than all his victories obtained in France or Wales.

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The glorious victories of Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, cannot fail to engage our attention, and fill the mind of an Engliſhman with the higheſt and moſt favourable opinion of the valour of his anceſtors[p]. The laurels reaped by an Edward and a Henry are ſtill freſh and unfading; and the voice of fame will proclaim their exploits to the remoteſt poſterity. Scenes of inteſtine commotion ſucceeded; and the Houſes of York and Lancaſter combated with the malice of demons, and the fierceneſs of barbarians, for the crown of the meek and pious Henry the ſixth[q]. The country was abandoned to the deſolation of war, the blood of the nobleſt families was ſhed; but no advantage accrued from ſuch inhuman conteſts to the general good of the people. The voice of law and humanity was drowned by the rude claſh of arms; and the incredible ſlaughter that was made by the contending factions was a melancholy proof of the prevalence of the feudal ſyſtem, and of the alacrity with which the people flew to arms, whenever the ſtandard of war was raiſed by the imperious barons.

[p] The victory gained at Creſſy, 1346; Poitiers, 1356; Agincourt, 1415.

A D. [illegible], & c.

While

While we remark the exorbitant influence of a martial ariſtocracy, and the indiſcretion and violence of ſome of the kings, whoſe meaſures they controuled more frequently from motives of ſelf-aggrandizement, than ardour for the public good, let us not forget to pay the tribute of juſtice to unfortunate monarchs. The caſtles of Berkley and Pomfret, and, in a later age, the tower of London, witneſſed the ſufferings of Edward the ſecond, Richard the ſecond, and Henry the ſixth, and were ſtained with their foul and nefarious murders. The temporiſing members of the parliaments, who had depoſed them, denied them even the privilege of a common ſubject, and refuſed to hear them in their own defence. The act of depoſition was virtually an order for their execution; ſince the experience of ages proves, that to a prince, when the allegiance of his ſubjects is withdrawn, the paſſage is ſhort from the throne to the grave. Although neither Edward nor Richard were much beloved in their proſperity; yet, by a revolution of opinions, natural to mankind, their ſufferings, aggravated by an untimely and cruel death, excited the pity, and even the veneration of their ſubjects. The proceedings of the houſes of parliament upon theſe trying occaſions proved

proved the wretched defects of the laws, and the uncontrolled power of the vindictive ſword. The fortunate Pretender to the crown, however black his perjury, or flagrant his rebellion, was allowed and even encouraged to trample upon the rights of humanity and juſtice, and wreſt the ſceptre from his lawful ſovereign. Yet after theſe ſevere conflicts, the royal prerogative regained its aſcendancy: the general liberties of the country were diſregarded, and all orders of the ſtate united with equal ſervility to proſtrate themſelves before the throne, and to preſent their ſwords and their eſtates to the diſpoſal of the conqueror [r].

The ſucceſſion of the Tudor family to the crown produced ſome important acquiſitions to the cauſe of freedom. Henry VII. whoſe conduct was influenced by oppreſſive avarice as well as conſummate policy, weakened the power of his nobles, by permitting them to alienate their lands. This privilege gave a deep and incurable wound to the feudal ſyſtem, and raiſed the reſpectability of the lower orders of the community, who were enabled, by the increaſing ſupplies of trade and commerce, to become the purchaſers of

[r] A. D. 1485.

eſtates. By dividing the lands among many proprietors, a competition of ſmall intereſts was produced; and thoſe great and formidable confederacies of the ariſtocratical power, which had ſo frequently excited the alarms of kings, and ſubverted their thrones in former ages, were prevented by this ſalutary meaſure, or at leaſt rendered very difficult to be formed.

The conduct of HENRY VIII. exhibited a perpetual ſtruggle of violent paſſions. His condemnation of two of his queens, of the gallant and accompliſhed Lord Surry, and of the facetious and learned Sir Thomas More, muſt conſign him to the hatred of all poſterity [q]. His love for the beautiful and unfortunate Ann Boleyn induced him to free his kingdom from the ſhackles of Papal ſupremacy, and introduce the reformation of religion. This event formed a new and extraordinary epoch in the Engliſh hiſtory. It repreſſed the inordinate power of the Clergy, aboliſhed the monaſtic orders, and, by founding religious principle upon reaſon and Scripture alone, improved the manly ſeriouſneſs and inherent dignity of the Britiſh character. The Reformation was highly favourable to civil as

[q] A. D. 1509. Rapin, vol. i. p. 794, &c. Carte, vol. iii. p. 1, &c. Hume, vol. iv. p. 35.

well

well as religious rights, and encouraged that ſpirit of free inquiry, from which it derived its origin. Men, who had the intrepidity to demoliſh the fabric of Popery, ſupported as it was by the antiquity of its eſtabliſhments, the ſplendour of its ceremonies, and the ſacred character of its miniſters, were not to be checked in their reſearches into the imperfections and abuſes of government. The ſeeds therefore of political innovation were deeply ſown; and although they were for ſome time checked in their growth, as all orders of his ſubjects bowed with the moſt abject ſervility before this impetuous and tyrannical monarch, yet in ſucceeding times their fruits ſprung up in the greateſt abundance.

Splendid as the reign of ELIZABETH appears, with reſpect to her tranſactions with foreign countries, ſhe inherited the temper of her father: the imperfections of her mind were thoſe for which the Tudor family was remarkable, and ſhe ruled with the moſt deſpotic ſway[r]. Uncontrollable in the indulgence of her paſſions, and by turns the ſlave of love and hatred, ſhe ſentenced her favourite Eſſex to death, and conſigned to a miſer-

[r] A. D. 1558.

able

able and tedious impriſonment, and finally to the axe of the executioner, a couſin and a ſovereign, whoſe charms excited her envy, and the ſuſpicion of whoſe conſpiracies provoked her revenge. Mary, queen of Scotland, many particulars of whoſe hiſtory are perplexed by contradictory accounts, and involved in obſcurity, has been made the object of admiration to ſucceeding ages, as much perhaps on account of her misfortunes, captivity, and cruel death, as her incomparable beauty, ſweetneſs of diſpoſition, excellence of underſtanding, and great virtues. The nobles feared and venerated Elizabeth; and her commons, more obſequious to her demands and caprice than the ancient parliaments of Paris ever were to the dictates of a French monarch, aſſembled only to learn and obey her will, and to tax their conſtituents for her ſupport. Her ſubjects were exempted from the privileges and cares of political power; and, at once dazzled by the ſplendour of her court, and the ſucceſs of her arms, the ſtrength of her underſtanding, the extent of her learning, and the maſculine intrepidity of her temper, were blind to her obſtinacy, diſſimulation, avarice, and cruelty.

James I. was eminent for the mildneſs of his

his diſpoſition, and the attention he always paid to removing the grievances of his ſubjects [s], in which circumſtance he afforded an illuſtrious contraſt to his immediate predeceſſors. In his pacific reign many encroachments were made upon the royal prerogative; or rather all the different orders of his kingdom began to feel their own importance, and were determined to exert their power [t]. The flouriſhing ſtate of commerce raiſed the merchants to great reſpectability; and their rapid increaſe of wealth naturally claimed ſuitable diſtinctions and privileges. The members of corporations were active in augmenting their rights; and the King, by an impolitic imitation of his predeceſſors, added to their number. The citizens of London were not ſo blinded by the condeſcenſion of their royal maſter in becoming a member of a company of merchants, as not to ſolicit large conceſſions from the throne. The ſpirit of fanaticiſm, diſcontent, and ambition, prevailed in the Houſe of Commons; and all the

[s] "Sir Edward Coke, at a time when he was out of favour and a malecontent, declared, that he never knew any complaint made to the King of any abuſe out of parliament, but he gave orders immediately to have it reformed." Carte, vol. iv. p. 129.

[t] A. D. 1602.

actions of the King, and his immediate successors, their folly or wisdom, their virtues or their vices, were equally exposed to complaint and opposition [u]. The caprice of his temper, and the unsteadiness of his conduct, appearing at one time resolved upon measures, which at another he retracted; writing one day to his House of Commons in a peremptory strain, and soon after sending them letters replete with concession and apology; gave great advantage to the artful supporters of the puritanical party, and encouraged them in the pursuit of their dark machinations against Church and State [x].

Such was the threatening aspect of affairs, when the amiable and accomplished CHARLES assumed the reins of government [y]. It was his peculiar misfortune to ascend the throne at a period, when no experience of his predecessors could be fully conclusive, as to the measures of state most proper to be adopted; and when the constitution of the country was in reality undergoing an alteration, while it appeared to be the same as in preceding times. Those who succeeded him discovered the change, and took the proper

[u] A. D. 1625. [x] Carte, vol. iv. p. 128.
[y] Carte, vol. iv. p. 606.

means to prevent its unhappy consequences: but the discovery, though afterwards easy to be made, was perhaps at that time placed out of the reach of human sagacity. The good qualities of Charles were more calculated to accelerate than to retard the fury of the storm, which threatened, and soon burst around him. Too scrupulous an adherence to his rights as a king, and his extraordinary zeal for the Church of England, contributed to introduce the train of events, which proved so fatal to himself, and so disastrous to his country.

In the early part of his reign, he was induced to exercise with too much severity that undefined prerogative, over the odious part of which the cautious Elizabeth had drawn a veil, but which her successor James had exerted with ostentatious parade upon trivial occasions. However inquisitorial the constitution of the Star Chamber and the high Commission Court was, or however rigid the punishments, which they denounced against state offences; their authority was fully sanctioned by ancient customs. Few if any clamours had been raised against their proceedings during the reigns of former sovereigns. But, unhappily for Charles, the decrees of the

the Star Chamber at firſt excited popular invectives and tumult, and finally provoked a ſteady and determined oppoſition. The people called with a peremptory voice for a general redreſs of grievances. It ought for ever to be remembered, that this call was obeyed, and that the fulleſt conceſſions were made on the part of the King previous to the great rebellion. But as ſuſpicions were entertained of the ſincerity of his declarations, his ſacrifices to the parliament, connected with ſome raſh actions and unguarded expreſſions, were conſidered rather as the reſult of compulſion than of choice. Cromwell, Fairfax, Ireton, and all the popular leaders, therefore, failed not to embrace an opportunity ſo favourable to their ambition. They fired the minds of their party with their own fanaticiſm, and plunged the nation into all the horrors of a civil war. The refuſal of Charles to reſign the appointment of officers in the militia, was a ſignal for the commencement of hoſtilities; and the royal ſword was finally drawn for the maintenance of a juſt prerogative, long after the parliament had recourſe to arms. The laſt ſcene of this tragical period is ſuch as the humane hiſtorian muſt lament to record, and the friend to regal government muſt peruſe with reluctance

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and horror; for it was closed with the solemn mockery of an illegal trial, and the murder of a monarch upon the scaffold[z]. Lord Clarendon concludes his character in these words: "He was the worthiest gentleman, the best master, the best friend, the best husband, the best father, and the best Christian, that the age he lived in produced[a]."

The violent convulsion, which subverted the throne, afforded an ample field of action to the abilities of the politic and hypocritical CROMWELL. He not only sought his safety in the destruction of the King, but established a complete despotism upon the ruins of the regal power. Under his conduct the army, as the prætorian bands had acted in the Roman empire, overawed the clamours of contending factions, and gave a master to their distracted country. The talents, courage, and political skill of the Protector shone equally in his conduct at home, and in his transactions abroad; and no prince who ever swayed the sceptre of this nation impressed the potentates of Europe with a more lively sense of the energy of the English councils, and the terror of the English arms.

[z] A. D. 1649.

[a] Clarendon's History, vol. iii. p. 199.

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To add to the wonders of his extraordinary history, amidst the alarms and the exertions of returning loyalty, he died a natural death, while he was attempting to convert a military government into one more permanent and more congenial to the temper of his countrymen [b].

The conduct of the parliament after the Restoration [c] at first sight appears to have been highly inconsistent. In the former part of the reign of Charles II. he was flattered by their most abject devotion to his will; and towards the conclusion of it, he was assailed by their determined opposition. But the apparent inconsistency of their conduct may be reconciled by adverting to the alteration of circumstances. The people, rescued from the despotism of Cromwell, and the oppression of his emissaries, were led, by

[b] His character by Lord Clarendon is thus concluded: "In a word, as he was guilty of many crimes, against which damnation is denounced, and for which hell-fire is prepared; so he had some good qualities, which have caused the memory of some men in all ages to be celebrated; and he will be looked upon by posterity as a brave wicked man." History of the Revolution, vol. iii. p. 509.

[c] A. D. 1660.

the extravagance of their joy, after the re-establishment of the ancient family, to express the most complete submission to the will of their Sovereign, and to testify the most ardent wishes to exalt the crown above the attack of popular rage. But when the projects of the King to introduce popery and arbitrary government were detected, they suddenly awoke to a full sense of a danger, equally alarming as that which they had recently escaped.

The tide of popular opinion therefore turned with violence against the King, who with his brother, the Duke of York, was nearly carried away by its current. The Commons boldly exerted their privileges. To the attention, which they paid to the oppression of an obscure individual, England is indebted for the final improvement of the act of Habeas Corpus, which rescues the prisoner as well from the delay of trial, which the ministers of the crown may devise, as from the cruelty of imprisonment out of his native country [d]. This statute may be regarded as an invaluable supplement to Magna Charta;

[d] A. D. 1679. Hume, vol. viii. p. 107. Letters of Junius, p. 226. De Lolme, p. 192. 362. 486. Rapin, vol. ii. p. 675. 707. Earl of Danby. Hume, vol. viii. p. 86.

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and the attentive reader of our hiſtory will not fail to remark, that ſuch meaſures as theſe were taken to extend the ſphere of liberty, during the reign of arbitrary princes [e]. This ſpirited Houſe of Commons impeached the Earl of Danby, who had baſely been inſtrumental in making his maſter a penſioner of France; it declared its hoſtility to Popery, and deliberated upon the excluſion of the Duke of York from the Crown, in conſequence of his avowed attachment to that religion, and his marriage with a Papiſt.

The death of the witty and diſſipated Charles II. while annulling the charters of great towns, and meditating ſchemes in order to make future parliaments obſequious to his inclination, ſaved him from the reſentment of an incenſed people. The conduct of James II. congenial in his principles, and more bold in the avowal and the execution of his deſigns than his brother, met with its due reward [f]. The eſtabliſhed religion of the country was inſulted by the erection of a Popiſh chapel in the midſt of the royal camp; the rights of election were infringed by the deſpotic appointment of a Popiſh preſident to Magdalen College in the Univerſity

[e] A. D. 1674. [f] A. D. 1684.

of

of Oxford; the privileges of parliament were violated by a ſtanding army, maintained in the time of profound peace, without their conſent; and the exertion of the right of ſubjects to preſent petitions to the King was puniſhed by the impriſonment of ſix biſhops in the tower. Popery and ſlavery ſeemed to be again returning with haſty ſteps; and the ſpirit of determined oppoſition was rouſed to check their advances. WILLIAM, prince of Orange, deſcended from the illuſtrious houſe of Naſſau, grandſon of Charles I. was invited to ſhare the throne with Mary, the daughter of James. The King, ſtruck with conſternation at the deſertion of his army, his fleet, and even his own children, threw up the reins of government, and was indebted to the clemency, or perhaps the policy of his enemies, for a ſecure eſcape into France.

The reign of the Stuarts conſiſted in a continued ſtruggle for power between the Monarch and his ſubjects. The public mind was kept in a conſtant ſtate of fermentation; and the times, however favourable to the exerciſe of political ſkill and courage, ſeemed to allow no leiſure for the cultivation of the intellectual powers, or the improvement of knowledge, which is uſually the growth of

tranquillity and repoſe. Yet amid the turbulence of this period was founded the Royal Society, an inſtitution, which has been particularly favourable to the promotion of ſcience and genuine philoſophy. The revolution was a moſt diſtinguiſhing epoch in the hiſtory of England, as it altered the line of ſucceſſion by a power immediately derived from the people, and gave ſuch an aſcendant to their liberty, as to extend its influence, ſecure its continuance, and place it upon a ſolid and durable foundation. The means by which it was accompliſhed, without the effuſion of blood, at leaſt upon Engliſh ground, were as extraordinary as the importance of it was great, not only to Britain, but to the common intereſts of Europe. At the auſpicious moment, when William III. gave his aſſent to the Bill of Rights, the fabric of the conſtitution was completed. The moſt valuable parts of the feudal ſyſtem, and the recent plans of liberty, were conſolidated in one conſiſtent and uniform maſs of juriſprudence [g]. The privileges of the people, and the prerogative of the King, were weighed in the balance of juſtice; and were aſcertained and defined, not ſo much by preſcription on the one hand, or the predominance of a de-

[g] A. D. 1688.

mocratic

mocratic party on the other, as by the more enlarged and moderate principles of reaſon and expediency. The important change then introduced into the ſucceſſion to the throne was calculated to exclude the repetition of ſuch an event, againſt which the laws had not before provided a remedy. That the crown ſhould never more be poſſeſſed by a Papiſt, was the important declaration made by the Bill of Rights: and with ſuch alarming apprehenſions did the revolutioniſts view a monarch of that deſcription, that they thought it neceſſary to deprive the future kings of England of the right given to every ſubject of chooſing his own religion. The arguments in favour of this reſtriction were cogent and irreſiſtible. The religious liberty of the people was regarded as intimately connected with their civil welfare. A recent example had taught them, that the character of a Popiſh prince was inſeparable from that of a deſpot; and they wiſhed for ever to prevent the repetition of the wrongs and outrages, which had ſprung from the union of bigotry with arbitrary power. Influenced by a ſpirit of moderation, and rather ſeeking a remedy for paſt abuſes, than framing a government upon principles of hazardous and untried theory, they made few changes in

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the eſtabliſhed laws and ſtatutes. But they thought it a duty incumbent upon them to embrace this opportunity of giving their due ſtrength, vigour, and authority, to the liberty of the ſubject. Accordingly, the aſcendancy of the law above the will of the King was fully declared, his diſpenſing authority was judged illegal, and the undoubted privileges of the ſubject to petition for a redreſs of grievances, and to provide for his ſelf-defence, were guarded againſt violation, in the moſt clear and poſitive terms. The King was inveſted with every power, which his predeceſſors had exerciſed over parliaments, corporations, the army, and the navy, except the power of doing injury; and his ſubjects were laid under thoſe equitable reſtraints, which were moſt conſiſtent with rational liberty. And to complete their independence, the privileges of Engliſhmen were not ſolicited as a favour, but aſſerted in the moſt emphatical terms, as an undoubted and inherent right. Allegiance and protection were declared reciprocal ties depending upon each other, and the dignity and honour of the King were involved in the ſecurity and happineſs of his ſubjects.

The reign of QUEEN ANNE was diſtin-

guiſhed

guiſhed by a ſucceſsful war againſt France, in which John Duke of Marlborough, one of the greateſt generals, not only of his age, but of modern times, defeated by a train of victories, at the head of the allied armies of England, Germany, and Holland, the attempts of Louis XIV. to obtain univerſal ſovereignty; and raiſed the renown both of himſelf and his country to the higheſt pitch of glory. This reign is alſo rendered memorable by the union of England and Scotland, and their joint repreſentation in the parliament of Great Britain—meaſures which the regularly increaſing proſperity of both countries ever ſince has amply juſtified[h]. The death of Queen Anne was followed by the ſucceſſion of the Houſe of Hanover to the throne; and each deſcendant of this illuſtrious family, particularly the REVERED SOVEREIGN who now holds the ſceptre of the United Kingdom, has ever protected the civil and religious rights of his ſubjects from violation, and built his glory upon the firmeſt baſis, by reigning in the hearts of his ſubjects, and maintaining the moſt endearing and the moſt exalted of all human characters—even that of being the FATHER OF HIS PEOPLE.

[h] A. D. 1706.

Expe-

Expedient as the ſteps taken at the Revolution might be to ſettle the government, it is unfortunate for the tranquillity of the country, that the event gave riſe to political diviſions. The Whigs and the Tories have ſince divided the kingdom, and kept alive the flames of party-ſpirit. Poſſibly, however, in a free country like our own, where a wide field is opened for a rivalry of talents, and a competition of intereſts, this counterbalance of parties may prevent evil, if it does not produce good. If the current of opinion flowed only in one ſtream, the vigilance of government might relax, the arrogance of men in office might want a ſalutary check, or their ſupineneſs be deprived of a ſtimulative; and no place could be found for that exertion of abilities, which often takes its riſe from oppoſition. Whatever be the party, under which they may be enliſted, we may be certain, the men in power can only ſecure the great and permanent proſperity of the nation by a conſcientious, upright, and magnanimous diſcharge of their duty. The hiſtory of the two parties, which is detailed with ſingular correctneſs[i] by Rapin, a diſpaſſionate and candid foreigner, affords ſufficient proofs how impolitic as well wicked it

[i] See Rapin, vol. iii. p. 796.

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is in every ſtateſman, while he holds the honours, preferments, and treaſures of the kingdom in his hands, not to prefer diſintereſtedneſs to corruption, independence to ſervility, and public good to every conſideration of partial and private advantage.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XII.

The Subject continued.

THIS tranſient and ſuperficial view of the progreſs of the conſtitution has enabled us to diſcover, that the rays of true liberty firſt illuminated our Saxon anceſtors: the deſpotiſm of the Normans ſuddenly obſcured this auſpicious morning; but the ſun of freedom broke through the gloom, ſpread its beams over Runny Mead, and the plains of Merton, where the barons nobly vindicated their ancient rights from the oppreſſion of their monarchs. The ſtorms of civil war between the Houſes of York and Lancaſter raged with violence for a time, and darkened the political horizon with the moſt tempeſtuous clouds. But the glorious ſun of liberty again diſplayed itſelf at the Reformation, was again obſcured by the conflict of King and people, and finally ſhone forth with meridian glory at the Revolution.

The gradual progreſs of liberty in England was not more beneficial with reſpect to the government of the country, than conducive

to the enlargement and freedom of opinion. The powers of the mind were directed with ardour and success to the examination of those rooted prejudices, which had been long received without sufficient reason. The struggles and conquests of contending factions gave birth to the exertions of Milton, Sidney, Locke, and Somers. These writers were the founders of new political schools; and we may rank among their disciples a Montesquieu, a Rousseau, a Voltaire, a Franklin, and a Washington. If ever the American is disposed to boast of the freedom of his country, let him recollect, that the lessons of that freedom were taught him by the parent state. When the French maintain, that the plans of any of their varying forms of democracy, since the revolution of 1789, have originated solely in the abstract principles and deduction of reason, they forget that Britain first suggested to their legislators their best and most approved maxims of government; and that even at the present moment, while they boast of enacting the most equitable laws, they transcribe the Statute Book of this country. When an Englishman makes this remark, he indulges much nobler and more generous feelings than those of vanity or arrogance; for he experiences the most genuine satis-

ſatisfaction to obſerve, that the bleſſings he enjoys are not limited to his own country: and while he proteſts againſt any deductions which may be made from the principles of his own government, that may diſturb ſocial order, and lead to anarchy and confuſion, he is happy whenever they are ſo judiciouſly reduced to practice as to promote the general welfare of mankind.

In tracing the ſtream of liberty from its loweſt ebb to its higheſt tide, the different events, which have been brought forward in this ſhort detail, are deſigned to ſuggeſt, rather than to ſtate a variety of uſeful reflections. It is evident that the Britiſh conſtitution has reached its preſent ſtate of improvement, not ſo much in conſequence of the deep and refined ſpeculations of philoſophers and politicians, as by the concuſſion of diſcordant intereſts, and the hoſtility of contending parties. The ſtruggles for power before the Revolution were very numerous, and in ſome of them the rights of kings were as flagrantly inſulted as thoſe of the people. The meaſures frequently employed for the deſtruction of the conſtitution, particularly in the reign of James II. were the means that ultimately ſtrengthened its powers, and gave freſh

fresh vigour to its operations. The auspicious effects and remote tendency of many transactions, which contributed to its improvement, were probably neither foreseen by the agents, nor formed any part of their plans.

From the reign of John to that of William III. every attempt in the form of war, treaty, and accommodation, has been made to narrow the circle, and define the power of the royal prerogative; and the designs of every true patriot, whenever sincerely directed to the promotion of the good of the community, have ever been ultimately crowned with success. In a period the most disastrous in the modern part of our history, viz. the usurpation of Cromwell, the rights of property, which is the basis of our political establishment, were grossly violated by a democratic faction. The populace were roused to arms to serve the ambitious purposes of hypocritical tyrants, and the monarchy was overturned. The events of past ages are recorded in vain, unless they afford useful lessons for the instruction of ourselves and our posterity.

The British Constitution deserves the grate-

grateful homage of every one who ſhares its bleſſings, and preſents to the attention of the political ſpeculatiſts, both of our own and other countries, the faireſt theme of admiration and applauſe [a].

[a] "The Engliſh," ſaid the illuſtrious Preſident de Monteſquieu, "are the moſt free people that ever were upon earth. England, of all the nations in the world, is that which has known how to make the moſt (all at the ſame time) of thoſe three great things, religion, commerce, and liberty."

Briſſot, who perhaps paid even with his life for the oppoſition of his actions to his opinions, ſays in his Letter to his conſtituents, "The Engliſh government, which I had inveſtigated upon the ſpot, appeared to me, in ſpite of its defects, a model for thoſe nations that were deſirous to change their government. The work of M. de Lolme, adds he, which is no more than an ingenious panegyric upon this excellent conſtitution, was at that time in the hands of the learned few. It ought to have been made known to my countrymen; for to make it known was to make it beloved." Fas eſt et ab hoſte doceri. Seward's Anecdotes, vol. ii. p. 386, &c.

"Happy conſtitution! which the people who poſſeſs it did not ſuddenly obtain: it has coſt them rivers of blood; but they have not purchaſed it too dear." Vattel in his Law of Nations.

See the equally impartial and honourable teſtimonies of Philip de Comines, Rapin, De Lolme, Frederic of Pruſſia, Beaumelle, the authors of the Encyclopédie Méthodique, &c. &c.

By the Conſtitution is to be underſtood, " that collection of laws, eſtabliſhments, and cuſtoms, derived from certain principles of expediency and juſtice, and directed to certain objects of public utility, according to which the majority of the Britiſh people have agreed to be governed." Or, according to a more popular mode of definition, it is " the legiſlative and executive government of Great Britain, conſiſting of the King, the Houſe of Peers, and the Houſe of Commons, as eſtabliſhed at the Revolution, and as their privileges have been explained by ſubſequent acts of parliament."

All the advantages of a repreſentative republic are derived from the right of the people to chooſe their own members of the Houſe of Commons, and from the important privileges which thoſe members enjoy.

The Houſe of Lords forms a middle link of the political chain between the King and the People, and is peculiarly uſeful, when regarded as a barrier againſt the uſurpations of arbitrary power on the one ſide, and the encroachments of popular licentiouſneſs on the other.

Conſi-

Considered as an assembly appointed for the revision of such measures, as may be brought forward with precipitation, either by the King or the House of Commons, they are of the highest importance to the state.

As the King is wholly dependent upon the other branches of the constitution for pecuniary aid, he is debarred from the execution of frivolous or ambitious projects, even were his ministers inclined to suggest them; and can only execute those plans, which are determined by the concurrent voice of the majority of his Parliament to be conducive to the good of the nation.

The Constitution of England includes the essence of the three different forms of government which prevail in the world, without their attendant disadvantages; for we have democracy without confusion, aristocracy without rigour, and monarchy without despotism. These principles are so compounded and mixed, as to form a political system, which is capable of producing more freedom, and true independence, than the renowned commonwealths of Athens and Rome could boast, or perhaps than was ever en-

enjoyed by any ſtate in its higheſt proſperity and perfection.

Here then we behold that theory reduced to practice, which *one* great Politician of antiquity pronounced to be the beſt; and which *another* eſteemed to be a fair ſubject of commendation; and yet if it ever ſhould exiſt, he maintained that it could not be permanent. The duration, however, of our conſtitution for ſo long a period of time, has happily proved, and, by the favour of a gracious Providence, it is devoutly hoped will continue to prove from age to age, the fallacy of his prediction[a].

[a] "Eſſe optime conſtitutam rempublicam, quæ ex tribus generibus illis, regali, optimo et populari, ſit modice confuſa." Cicero Fragm. de Repub. lib. ii.

"Cunctas nationes et urbes populus aut primores, aut ſinguli regunt: delecta ex his, et conſtituta reipublicæ forma laudari facilius quam evenire, vel ſi evenit, haud diuturna eſſe poteſt." Tacitus, Ann. lib. iv.

The original idea is to be found in Polybius: ſpeaking of the three different kinds of government, the regal, the ariſtocratical, and the democratic, he ſays, Δηλον γαρ ὡς αριϛην μεν ἡγητεον πολιτειαν την εκ παντων των προειρημενων ιδιωματων συνεϛωσαν. Polyb. lib. vi. p. 628. vol. ii. Edit. Caſaub.

Upon the nature of different governments, their origin and revolutions, this profound Author, whoſe works ought to be carefully ſtudied by every ſtateſman, has made ſome judicious remarks in his ſixth Book.

 This

This is the ſource of ſocial order and comfort, and from it flow the invaluable rights of free-born Engliſhmen. Theſe rights conſiſt in the full enjoyment of ſecurity, liberty, property, and the impartial adminiſtration of the laws. The Engliſhman, whenever he is attacked, is not condemned to ſilence, or left unprotected. He can exerciſe a cenſorial power over his enemies, and ſpeak, or publiſh his ſentiments to the world. The courts of law are open to his complaints, and he may throw himſelf with perfect confidence upon the upright and impartial deliberations of a jury of his equals. He can petition the King and Parliament for a redreſs of his grievances, and he can keep arms for his defence ſuitable to his rank and condition. He thus enjoys all the privileges, which the ſocial compact, when properly underſtood, can beſtow, and his ſphere of action is as enlarged as a good citizen can deſire. It is indeed only confined within ſuch limits, as guard him from actions, which would prove diſhonourable to himſelf, and pernicious to the public [b].

This Conſtitution is well adapted to the manners and character of the people. The freedom of ſpirit, which forms its baſis and

[b] See Blackſtone's Comment. vol. i. p. 50, 127. vol. iii. p. 60. vol. iv. p. 267, &c.

pro-

produces its glory; and the rational checks, which are laid upon the different branches of the legiſlature, accord with that complexional boldneſs of diſpoſition, which is corrected by our national ſedateneſs and deliberation of character. The temper of the people, like their climate, is variable and cloudy, continually exhibiting the moſt ſtriking contraſts: but their principles of action, like thoſe of their government and their religion, are permanent and fixed.

The mild adminiſtration of juſtice, and the indulgence of the law to the accuſed, is correſpondent with that national benevolence, which at the call of diſtreſs and indigence pours forth a ſtream of bounty with a degree of copiouſneſs unknown in any other country. The equality of the laws, extending their unbounded control, their reſtraints, and privileges, from the throne to the cottage, cheriſhes the native dignity of the Briton, and increaſes the intrepidity of his character. This equality is moreover an incentive to every uſeful enterpriſe, and encourages that activity of mind and body, which is natural to man. In the extenſion of trade and commerce to every quarter of the globe, in the perfection of manufactures, in the works of art,

art, literature, and ſcience, and in the execution of great projects which are recommended by the moſt diſtant proſpect of public utility, the Engliſhman is ardent and indefatigable, and outſtrips in the race of competition all other inhabitants of the earth.

Such is the proſpect of the Britiſh Government, and ſuch are its tranſcendent advantages and benign effects. Still, however, we are accuſtomed to hear complaints of the prevalence of various political evils, and public grievances. There are ſome indeed, which the enemies of their country exaggerate with a malevolent pleaſure, and others which its friends acknowledge with ſincere concern. But theſe are not the faults of the Conſtitution; for if they were, the Conſtitution could remove them. And this diſplays the advantages ariſing from our political ſyſtem in a new and ſtriking light. For does it not poſſeſs a principle of amendment, and a capacity of melioration? Without requiring any other aid, can it not ſupply a remedy for every diſeaſe, which it is in the power of any human ſyſtem to alleviate or to cure? The three great branches of which it conſiſts, the King, the Lords, and the Commons, can of themſelves reviſe what is obſolete, correct

what is wrong, extend what is partial, and ſupply what is deficient in the laws and conſtitutions of the ſtate. They can remove the obſtructions which impede the progreſs of the political machine; they can give new ſtrength to its various parts, and new velocity to its motion. And the Acts of Parliament which are paſſed every ſeſſion, adapted to the particular circumſtances and neceſſities of the times, are conſpicuous and glorious proofs of this energetic and beneficial power.

Have we not therefore, I may confidently aſk, abundant reaſon to glory in the name and the privileges of Britons? Has not Providence ſhewed its peculiar kindneſs in placing us in this favoured iſland, and ſheltering us under the protection of this moſt excellent ſyſtem? Let us caſt our eyes around the globe, ſurvey the mighty empires of the world, and contemplate the forms of government, by which they are diſtinguiſhed; and then let us aſk, if they can ſupply us with a ſuperior, or an equal ſhare of political good. From the arbitrary ſway of a Ruſſian Czar, or a Turkiſh Sultan, an Engliſhman turns with averſion: and with what eyes can he ſurvey the inhabitants of other countries, with

whom

whom he has a cloſer relation from ſimilarity of manners, or vicinity of ſituation? Can he look with deſire upon the unſtable government of France, or the federal union of the American ſtates? While the former preſents a ſcene of military deſpotiſm, and the latter exhibits the claſhing intereſts of a diſcordant ſyſtem, ſettled upon no ſolid baſis, and liable to be torn aſunder by internal diviſions; they can excite no emotions but thoſe which increaſe his attachment to his own country —a country, which has from generation to generation been favourable to the progreſs of that *true Liberty*, which in ancient times ſhewed, and *only* ſhewed, herſelf for a ſhort period to the brave and ingenious nations of the ſouth of Europe. Short was her influence in poliſhed Athens, ſhort in martial Rome. Loſt to the world for ages, during the baleful prevalence of general tyranny, ſuperſtition, and barbarity, ſhe at laſt ſought the ſhores of Britain; and finding the character and the genius of the people favourable to her great deſigns, here ſhe fixed her abode, and developed her matchleſs plan. Here ſhe ſeats a King upon the throne, whoſe happineſs is centered in that of his ſubjects; and one of the nobleſt and moſt illuſtrious acts of whoſe reign has been to render the diſpenſers of the laws

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perfectly independent of his will. Here she establishes the members of the Houses of Parliament, loyal, enlightened, and magnanimous. The expression of their united will is equal law, justice, toleration, security, order, and happiness. The rulers and the people, both those who give, and those to whom this happiness is imparted, deserve it the more, as it is their ardent wish and uniform endeavour to communicate the same blessings to others, which they enjoy themselves. In whatever regions of the globe the British commerce flourishes, are also felt the happy effects of the British polity. From the bleak mountains of Scotland, to the sunny shores of Malabar, is diffused its benign influence; and no place attests the power of Britain, which does not equally witness the mildness of her government, and the excellence of her laws.

Every member of the British empire will best prove the value he sets upon the blessings of the Constitution by a judicious exercise of the rights which it confers. But to defend this venerable edifice of liberty from the machinations of domestic, and the assaults of foreign enemies, is a charge which devolves more immediately upon the nobility,

and upon thoſe who are deputed to repreſent their countrymen in parliament. The conſcientious and careful exerciſe of this moſt honourable truſt is a duty which they owe to their anceſtors, to themſelves, and to their deſcendants; and what labour can be too unremitting, what vigilance too active, what public ſpirit too exalted and ardent, to preſerve unſullied and unimpaired a CONSTITUTION, which is the brighteſt ornament, the moſt glorious privilege, and the moſt valuable inheritance ever enjoyed by mankind?

Hail ſacred Polity, by Freedom rear'd!
Hail ſacred Freedom, when by law reſtrain'd!
Without you what were men? a grov'ling herd,
In darkneſs, wretchedneſs, and want enchain'd.
Sublim'd by you, the Greek and Roman reign'd
In arts unrivall'd: O to lateſt days,
In Albion may your influence unprofan'd
To godlike worth the gen'rous boſom raiſe,
And prompt the ſage's lore, and fire the poet's lays[e].

[e] Beattie's Minſtrel.

END OF THE HISTORICAL CLASS,

AND OF VOL. I.